

Clinton reaffirms support for Arafat

GAZA CITY (AFP) — U.S. President Bill Clinton sent a letter to Palestine National Authority (PNA) Chairman Yasser Arafat expressing support and pledging to back peace efforts in the Middle East, officials said Saturday. U.S. Health Secretary Donna Shalala delivered the letter to Mr. Arafat during a visit here Saturday. Mr. Arafat's spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeimat said the PNA leader sent a response to Mr. Clinton through Ms. Shalala. Mr. Clinton's support comes as Mr. Arafat's Palestinian self-rule authority recovers from the worst violence in the Gaza Strip since it took charge six months ago. Ms. Shalala, who toured health facilities here, told reporters the United States would back the Palestinians at a meeting of international donors to be held in Brussels next Tuesday and Wednesday (see page 12). Palestinians have complained that they have received only a small proportion of the promised \$720 million in international donations for 1994. They are expected to push for more assistance at the Brussels meeting, stressing the dangers of violence linked to poverty and frustration in Gaza.

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Palestinians rally in Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Palestinians clashed with Israeli police on the main street of Arab East Jerusalem on Saturday, witnesses and police said. A police spokeswoman said two Arab youths threw firebombs at police and were arrested. A witness said two youths were seized by plainclothes policemen who took them away in a police van. Palestinians said the clash began with a sit-in by relatives of Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails, demanding their release. Demonstrators burned one tire in the street.

Sudan rights body claims successes

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudan's recently established human rights committee claimed Saturday that it had secured the release of four detainees and resolved a dozen other cases, as well as investigating the alleged summary execution of two Sudanese working for international organisations. But committee members attacked the United Nations special rapporteur on human rights, Gaspar Biro, and defended the right of the Khartoum government to defend its territory. They also accused the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army of carrying out human rights abuses, including executions, the burning of mosques and the enforced conscription of youths, saying the international community had "turned a blind eye" to such abuses.

Algerian forces kill 49 rebels

TUNIS (R) — Algerian security forces shot dead 49 armed Muslim rebels in the past three days in 12 areas across Algeria, the official Algerian news agency APS said on Saturday. The fundamentalists, fighting to overthrow the army-backed authorities, were killed in clashes and raids between Wednesday and Friday, APS said. Among those slain were two militants sentenced to death by a special court and freed from their cells by armed guerrillas in a raid last March on Tazouit high security prison in eastern Algeria, the statement said. Seventeen other guerrillas were also reported earlier this week as having been shot dead including 13 killed in a forest near the western town of Tipaza, 60 kilometres from Algiers.

14 Iraqis demand asylum in Greece

ATHENS (AFP) — Fourteen Iraqis demanded political asylum in Greece on Saturday after spending 48 hours cooped in a transit room at Athens airport, police said. A Greek lawyer notified of the immigrants' plight made an official request for their case to be heard, a police source said. Airport police refused to allow the 14 to enter the country after Albania threw them out Thursday. They had reached Albania by air from Amman, police said, adding that Athens airport authorities had at first kept the affair under wraps to allow them time to try to persuade the Iraqis to return home. The ministry for public order is now to examine the immigrant's asylum plea.

500 guns stolen from Egypt store

CAIRO (AFP) — Five hundred automatic rifles and revolvers were stolen from an arms store belonging to the security forces in southern Egypt, police said Saturday. Interior Minister Hassan Al Alfli had ordered an inquiry with police in charge of security at the depot after the weapons went missing last week. Security forces have recovered about 100 of the stolen weapons during a sweep of arms smugglers in the Qena province, 650 kilometres south of Cairo.

JD 1.674b draft budget focuses on development

Deficit cut to JD 50m; no plans to raise fuel prices; hopes high for aid

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter



Sami Gammoh

AMMAN — Finance Minister Sami Gammoh Saturday unveiled a JD 1.67 billion draft budget for 1995 with a deficit of JD 50 million.

The 1995 budget reflects a 10 per cent increase of last year's budget of JD 1.5 billion.

Mr. Gammoh told a press conference that the JD 50 million deficit reflected a dramatic drop from 1994's shortfall of JD 300 million. It was approved by the Council of Ministers on Saturday and would go to Parliament this week.

"It is an ambitious and optimistic draft budget in harmony with the Kingdom's aims in the next peace phase and the coming era in the Middle East," Mr. Gammoh said.

The budget envisages JD 443.1 million dinars in capital spending and set aside an extra JD 390 million dinars as extra capital budget for development projects — but implementation hinged on expected 1995 foreign aid.

Mr. Gammoh said 1995 capital spending took into account multi-billion dollar projects to develop Jordan Rift Valley between Jordan and Israel and building water dams in line with the peace treaty the country signed on Oct. 26.

The budget estimates foreign grants at JD 165 million, compared with 1994's JD 127.0 in the reassessed 1994 budget, an increase of JD 130

million, or 10.2 per cent.

Premium on repayable loans are estimated at JD 59 million for 1995, up from JD 55 million in 1994.

Capital expenditures are estimated at JD 1.674 billion, registering an increase of JD 254.9 million over the reassessed figures of the 1994 budget, accounting for 16.2 per cent in accordance with the following:

(i) Current expenditure is estimated at JD 1230.9 million, marking an increase of JD 112.4 million over the re-estimated figures of the 1994 budget of JD 1118.5 million — a 10 per cent increase.

(ii) Capital expenditure is estimated for 1995 at JD 443.1 million, registering an increase of JD 122.5 million over the re-estimated figures of 1994 which amounted to JD 318.6 million; an increase of 28.5 per cent. The increase primarily stems from expected hikes in expenditure in telecommunications, transport, water, tourism, and dams.

The 1995 draft fiscal budget contains an additional capital budget estimated at JD 390 million to finance projects given priority in the peace era and to cover the needs of governorates where they are intended to help create new jobs, stem poverty and raise the standard of people's living. These projects will be financed from

(Continued on page 7)



UNDER FIRE: A woman looks up to a burning house in Sarajevo after it was hit by a shell as sniping and anti-aircraft fire slammed into the city Saturday (see page 5) (AFP photo)

Jordan and Israel today announce diplomatic ties

Muasher confirmed as envoy in Tel Aviv; Barak tipped to be Amman counterpart

By Caroline Faraj
Special to the Jordan Times



Ehud Barak

AMMAN — Jordan and Israel today announced the establishment of diplomatic ties between them.

The announcements will be made at 11 a.m. in a joint communique.

It is expected that Jordan will announce the appointment of Marwan Muasher as the Kingdom's ambassador to Israel.

Israel was reportedly considering outgoing Israeli chief of staff, Ehud Barak, as its envoy in Amman. Officials said that it was highly likely that Mr. Barak would be confirmed as Israel's first ambassador to Jordan.

Dr. Muasher was the Kingdom's spokesman during the Middle East peace negotiations. He also served as director of the Jordan Information Bureau in Washington.

Based on decisions taken by the Jordanian and Israeli cabinets in implementation of the peace treaty signed by the two countries on Oct. 26, a Jordanian delegation headed by Omar Al Rifai, an advisor at the Foreign Ministry, will

possible that the delegation will rent a house or a suite at one of Tel Aviv's hotels in view of the short time facing the two countries in order to meet the Dec. 10 deadline set by the peace treaty for the two countries to open embassies in each other's capitals.

Israel is expected also to do the same in Amman.

The source expected that the Israeli and Jordanian embassies will have a staff of six to seven people; four will be diplomats and the rest will work as advisors and administrators.

Israeli delegation headed by Assistant Foreign Minister Eitan Ben Tsour will arrive in Amman Thursday on a two-day visit to the Kingdom.

The delegation will hold talks on Jordanian-Israeli relations and the implementation of some of the peace treaty's provisions.

Meanwhile Israel radio said Environment Minister Yossi Sarid had made a "private" visit to Jordan on Friday where he met Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Transport Minister Samir Qawar at Karameh in the Jordan Valley.

Hrawi warns of intervention to quell Palestinian fighting

BEIRUT (Agencies) — The government warned warning Palestinian factions Saturday that it would send its army into refugee camps to quell any renewal of fighting, which killed 10 people and wounded 25 the day before.

A government statement said President Elias Hrawi made his stern warning after discussing with visitors Friday's street battles between Yasser Arafat's loyalists and foes at Ain Al Hilweh shantytown, the biggest refugee camp in Lebanon.

Lebanese police described the clashes as the worst in Lebanon since the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed the self-rule accord with Israel Sept. 13, 1993.

At stake was control of the sprawling camp that houses 60,000 Palestinians on the southeastern outskirts of Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut.

The clashes tapered off at nightfall with both sides more or less back where they were when the fighting started.

Mr. Hrawi said Lebanese troops have surrounded 'Ain Al Hilweh to prevent the conflict from spilling into the streets of Sidon. Provincial capital of South Lebanon, Lieutenant-Colonel Khaled Al Shayeb, said the clashes were sparked by a power

struggle within the ranks of Fatah forces in the camp.

Palestinian sources said guerrillas by Colonel Maqdad then joined in the day-long clashes.

Lebanese troops have maintained posts and checkpoints around 'Ain Al Hilweh ever since they fought fierce battles there with PLO guerrillas in 1991 in eventually successful attempts to take the guerrillas' heavy weapons.

Security sources said during Friday's clashes the army had increased checkpoints at the entrance to the camp.

The Arafat opponents managed to regain control of six positions lost to guerrillas loyal to Mr. Arafat earlier on Friday.

A Reuters correspondent who toured the sprawling camp south of Beirut said Mr. Arafat's Fatah guerrillas, numbering about 650, and some 200 dissident fighters led by Col. Maqdad manned their respective posts.

No shot was fired after midnight, he reported, quoting Palestinian and Lebanese security sources.

The correspondent said the rival factions, armed with AK-47 rifles, remained inside or stood outside their posts, some of which are less than 20 metres apart.

Majali to visit UAE soon

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Saturday announced that he would soon make an official visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), adding that Jordan's relations with all the Gulf states were improving.

Speaking at a meeting with the Lower House of Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee, Dr. Majali said that Jordan was exerting all possible efforts towards bridging the gap with other Arab states and seeking solidarity among Arab and Islamic nations.

Jordan's relations with the Arab countries are marked with mutual and brotherly respect, and they are continuously improving, said the prime minister, who added that Saudi Arabia's approval of Jordan's nomination of a new ambassador to Riyadh was a positive indication of improved relations.

Describing his recent visit to Qatar as extremely successful, Dr. Majali said he discussed with the emir's leaders all issues of common concern as well as the Palestinian problem.

Relations with Kuwait are showing signs of improvement after Jordan explained its position, reaffirming its determination to protect Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity, Dr. Majali said.

Dr. Majali said Jordanian-Syrian ties were good but Jordan was pursuing efforts to further improve them. He said Jordan hopes Syria would regain all its occupied territories.

He said Jordan maintains a unique relationship with the Iraqi people and tries hard to lift the embargo on them and end the tragedy and the sufferings of the Iraqi people after Baghdad has complied with all relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Dr. Majali said there were no direct contacts with the Palestine National Authority (PNA) although the Palestinian brothers had promised to return to Amman in two weeks to resume talks, after a round of meetings in October.

But, he said, the Palestinians seem to be involved in their internal affairs and Jordan is determined to help end the suffering of the Palestinian people and provide facilities to them across the bridges.

Dr. Majali said Jordan would never allow the disputes between Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to spill over to Jordan. Nor would Jordan support one party against the other, he said.

Referring to the situation in the former Yugoslavia, Dr. Majali said that Jordan had been increasing its contacts with various nations in efforts to lift the siege on Bosnia and ending the massacre there. He said Jordan was doing all in its power to help the Bosnians overcome their ordeal.

Jordan's relations with European countries and the United States are excellent and Jordan was expecting more U.S. and European economic aid to the Kingdom, Dr. Majali said.

He said Jordan was maintaining contacts with Japan to help organise the Amman economic conference to be held in the spring of 1995.

Abdul Karim Kabariti, chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, said at the outset of the meeting that the Kingdom's foreign policy had focused on the Arab-Israeli conflict in view of the need to deal with some of the pressing issues and to protect its interests and security.

Mr. Kabariti said Jordan's policy had always viewed inter-Arab relations as relations between a united Arab

(Continued on page 7)



Hamas activists shout anti-Israeli and anti-Yasser Arafat slogans Saturday in Gaza City as they wave pictures of Hamas leader Imad Akel, killed a year ago by Israeli troops (AFP photo)

police opened fire. The PLO accused Islamic agitators of firing first, a charge the prayer leaders demand among all political groups.

The two main Islamic opposition groups, the Islamic Resistance Movement or Hamas and Islamic Jihad, have staged a series of violent attacks on Israeli targets over the past two months in an attempt to derail the Israeli-PLO self-rule accord. Mr. Arafat's administration, seeking to spread the accord into the occupied West Bank, seeks to crack down on the violence.

The master of ceremonies greeted members of the Izzeddin Al Qassam Brigades, Hamas's military wing, and said: "We want to make it clear that the bullets of Qassam will be fired only against the Israeli occupation."

Since the Nov. 17 clashes, the bloodiest since self-rule began in May, the various Palestinian factions have been negotiating to prevent further internal fighting.

The two-hour demonstration was unruly but dispersed without bloodshed.

"This is a message to (PNA President Yasser) Arafat that the opposition outnumbers the supporters of peace in Gaza," said Sayid Aby Jiyab, a 19-year-old student.

The Israeli army and Palestinian police beefed up their forces at a junction near the Jewish settlement of Netzarim on the city's outskirts. Four soldiers have been killed there in November and troops feared that rally might spark a march on the settlement of 180 Jews.

Rally speakers demanded the dismantling of all Gaza

settlements before they spark civil war between Palestine

(Continued on page 7)

Middle East News

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1994

Jordanian traders leave for Baghdad

AMMAN (Agencies) — A group of Jordanian business men left for Iraq on Saturday in an attempt to revitalise trade links with Baghdad and discuss future cooperation.

The 25-man team, headed by Hamdi Tabbaa, president of the Jordanian Businessmen's Association (JBA), will spend four days in Baghdad at the invitation of the Iraqi Union of the Chambers of Commerce.

The group is one of the largest to visit Iraq since the United Nations slapped a sweeping trade embargo on Baghdad after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

JBA officials said the team would meet the Iraqi minister of trade and other leading public and private sector figures to discuss business deals with Iraq.

Scores of Western businessmen, encouraged by prospects of an imminent easing of sanctions after Iraq recognised Kuwait's new U.N. demarcated borders, have been visiting Iraq to look for business opportunities.

Iraq remains Jordan's biggest trade partner despite an Iraqi dinar crisis and the sanctions, which have barred all business deals except for food, medicine and other

humanitarian needs.

Iraq still gets most of its U.N.-authorised imports via Libya.

Most Jordanian business men say they remain wary of deals with Iraq, mainly because of over-ordering by their Iraqi counterparts and the financial risks involved.

Earlier this week, team member Ali Yousef told the Associated Press that the Jordanian private sector had to boost its links with the Iraqi market so as to be ready when the sanctions are lifted.

The embargo was imposed by the U.N. Security Council following Iraq's Aug. 2, 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Iraq was evicted from Kuwait in February 1991, but the sanctions remain in place pending Iraq's full compliance with U.N. cease-fire terms.

Unlike the United States and Britain, the other three permanent members of the Security Council — China, Russia and France — advocate the easing of the embargo, which includes a ban on Iraqi oil sales, the country's economic mainstay.

Before the Kuwait invasion, annual trade between Iraq and Jordan amounted to \$700 million, including Iraqi oil sales to the Kingdom.

PBS documentary draws fire from American Muslims

By Rick Marshall
WASHINGTON (USA) — A group of American Muslim and Arab leaders are strongly protesting the controversial documentary film "Jihad in America," which was televised nation-wide Nov. 21 by the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS).

The documentary, which was directed by journalist Stephen Emerson, purported to show a network of Islamic terrorists operating freely within the United States.

"I am disturbed that PBS had to do a documentary like this," Abdul Rahman Al Amoudi, executive director of the American Muslim Council, said at a press conference at the National Press Club Nov. 22. "Muslim communities in the United States do not condone violence."

"We are law-abiding citizens," Mr. Al Amoudi said, and are "very proud of being Americans."

The documentary "presented a frightening and distorted image of Islamic values and of Muslim life in America, linking them to terrorism and to a wide range of unconstitutional and illegal actions and declarations," Candace Lightner, president of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, said in a prepared statement issued Nov. 22.

Ms. Lightner placed the documentary within the context of "a long-standing trend of negative reporting and bias in U.S. press coverage of Arabs and Muslims and of the Arab American and Muslim American communities." Emerson's production, she added, "followed in this reprehensible tradition."

The press conference was attended by representatives of almost a dozen American Muslim and Arab-American groups. Without exception, they criticised Emerson's work as unbalanced and stated that he had failed to substantiate his claims that an Islamic terrorist network exists.

Many felt that the documentary could lead to a backlash against American of Muslim or Arab origin.

"We are facing a new McCarthyism," Nihad Awad, the executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations said, referring to the anti-Communist hysteria unleashed by Wisconsin Senator Joe McCarthy in the early 1950s.

"The misinformation contained in the PBS documentary — a documentary made with taxpayer money — will not contribute to the development of understanding in America," according to the Islamic Society of North America.

"We are confident that the learned among our fellow Americans are intelligent enough to seek the truth from original sources and are able to reject such sensationalism... The spread of misinformation will only lead to lack of knowledge and creation of hate. We assure you that Muslims are only encouraged by such attacks to further their on-going work of reaching out to their fellow Americans in order to build bridges of understanding and peace in order to jointly pursue the course of building a better America."

For its part, PBS responded to the charges leveled against Emerson by stating, in a release dated Nov. 16, that the documentary "is a well-documented work of investigative journalism that presents evidence supported by two years of work, including newly uncovered videotapes and interviews with senior counter-terrorist FBI and law enforcement officials."

"The focus of Jihad in America is not the U.S. Islamic community, but the activities of a small number of militants who advocate violent holy war. The film makes this distinction clear."

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541. Armenian Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543. Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331. Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261. St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771251. Amman International Church Tel. 652526. Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824326. German Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195. The Letter Day School Tel. 654932. Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691. The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.

PRAYER TIMES

Fajr (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:23 Dhuhr
14:13 'Asr
16:38 Maghrib
17:58 'Isha'

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Tel. 810740. Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785. St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590. Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440. De la Salle Church Tel. 661757. Terra Sancta Church Tel. 623366.

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541. Armenian Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543. Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331. Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261. St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771251. Amman International Church Tel. 652526. Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824326. German Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195. The Letter Day School Tel. 654932. Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691. The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.

Min/Max Temp.

Amman 40/10

Agaba 9/7 21

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A cold air front will affect the Kingdom, with temperatures will drop steadily with the cold. Rainfall will be moderate to active. In Agaba, skies will be partly cloudy with a chance of showers, winds southerly active, and seas choppy.

Electric Power Company

Alquida pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Princess Faqih 906130



CLASHES IN LEBANON: Munir Maqqadah (centre), Fateh's former military chief opposed to Yasser Arafat, is surrounded by his militiamen Saturday after he regained control of the 'Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp in South Lebanon following clashes with Arafat supporters (see page one) (AFP photo)

Ghali holds talks in Algeria

Special to the Jordan Times

TUNIS (R) — U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, in North Africa to try to rescue a stalled peace plan for the Western Sahara, on Saturday met Algerian President Liamine Zeroual in Algiers.

Algerian state radio said the two men discussed cooperation between the country, racked by civil strife, and the United Nations, and peace efforts in the Western Sahara.

Algeria is the main supporter of the Polisario Front whose guerrillas are seeking independence for the Western Sahara, a former Spanish colony claimed by Morocco.

Dr. Ghali, who arrived in Algiers on Friday and held immediately talks with Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi, was accompanied by his Special Representative for the Western Sahara Erik Jensen.

On Saturday, Dr. Ghali met Algerian Foreign Minister Mohammad Salah Dembri. The U.N. secretary-general was due to fly later to the southwest Algerian town of Inouï, the main base of Polisario guerrillas.

Algerian radio, reporting from Inouï, said the Polisario leaders hope to hear new proposals from Dr. Ghali when they meet him there on Sunday.

Both Morocco and the Polisario Front, which says its self-proclaimed republic in the Western Sahara is recognised by more than 70 countries, blame each other for the much-delayed peace plan.

Dr. Ghali told the Security Council recently that a repeatedly postponed referendum to give Saharans a choice between independence and integration with Morocco could not take place on Feb. 14, 1995 because of continued disputes over who could vote.

A 320-strong U.N. force called Minurso, the U.N. Mission for a Referendum in Western Sahara, has been registering voters in the territory since Aug. 28. But only a very few applicants have been identified for registration.

Polisario leaders have accused Morocco of attempting to pad the electoral roll with supporters from outside the territory.

Disturbing world statistics of water very relevant to Mideast

Mr. Afram added that of the existing 1,800 CBM freshwater per earth inhabitant/year, not more than an average 800 CBM per inhabitant/year were currently exploited.

Environmental pollution, climatic changes leading to an increasing number of both floods and droughts, desertification, population growth and industrial and economic development were the main reasons of the increasing worldwide water shortage. Mr. Afram said.

"In 1940, the world population consumed around 100/CBM per year," he explained. "Currently, human beings consume an estimate 4130 KCBM per year, and water consumption is estimated to reach 5190 CBM per year by the year 2000," Mr. Afram said.

He recommended building storage facilities, water harvesting and afforestation to exploit Lebanon's water resources more efficiently.

Mr. Afram lamented the widespread irresponsible use of water resources, saying that "among the natural elements, water is the most polluted one." He said that deforestation, i.e. the cutting of trees, had weakened the soil's capacity to withhold water in many areas, thus leading to erosion and desertification.

Mr. Afram demanded that the protection and storage of water should be given foremost priority, apart from creating new water resources, like, for example, desalination. He stated that only 40 per cent of the flood waters in Europe, Africa and North America are currently being stored.

Quoting the example of Lebanon, Mr. Afram said his country's water resources theoretically were more than sufficient to meet the population's needs. Lebanon's total precipitation amounts to 8,600 million cubic metres (MCM) per year, while the country's current water demand does not exceed 3300 mcm per year. "But half of the precipitations are lost because of evaporation," he said. Another 510 MCM of water from Al Asi and Al Kabir rivers go to Syria, Mr. Afram said.

Israel, in the self-declared "security zone" in

South Lebanon utilises an estimated 160 MCM from the Hasbani River and it gets another 160 MCM from groundwaters of the River Dan, Mr. Afram added.

In spite of that, with a remaining 3480 MCM of surface and ground water available per year, Lebanon theoretically would still be able to meet its water demand. "But because of the drought in summer and the lack of storage facilities, more than half of our surface and groundwater resources are getting lost every year," said Mr. Afram.

He recommended building storage facilities, water harvesting and afforestation to exploit Lebanon's water resources more efficiently.

In neighbouring Syria, most of the small and medium size rivers are contaminated by the discharge of sewage systems and industrial effluents, said Mr. Abdallah Droubi from the Arab Centre for Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD). He said that surface water in the Damascus and Aleppo areas had been polluted because of industrial expansion and lack of sanitation facilities, and that shallow aquifers had been partly polluted by these surface waters.

In addition, some coastal and arid regions of Syria have been contaminated by salt water, Mr. Droubi said, adding that the Dawa and Radd basins and the Latakia and Akkar coastal plains were particularly concerned by salination.

He said that waterlogging and soil salination had also occurred in several parts of the rift valley and in a large part of the Euphrates plain.

Mr. Droubi recommended establishing a strong political and organisational framework to ensure environmental pollution control and reinforce water resources management and water legislation. "Water policy should be strongly linked with environmental policy, they should have the same objectives," he said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq calls on Israel to sign nuclear treaty

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A senior official on Saturday called on Arab countries to put pressure on Israel to join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. "The Arab Nation has to get rid of all weapons of mass destruction and the Arabs must force Israel to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty," said Saad Kasseb Hammudi, from the ruling Baath Party's external affairs department. "It is not just necessary to make Israel sign this treaty, but also to ensure its installations and nuclear programmes are subjected to close surveillance," he added. He told the Iraqi daily Bab al-Naba that "the United States is backing and encouraging Israel (in its nuclear programmes) to force the Arabs to join in the peace process." UN Security Council resolutions imposed on Iraq after the 1991 Gulf war called on Baghdad to destroy its arms of mass destruction and agree to the setting up of a long-term weapons monitoring system. Israel has neither confirmed nor denied reports it possesses nuclear weapons.

Refugees flee Somaliland fighting.

ADDIS ABABA (AFP) — About 20,000 Somali refugees have crossed the border into Ethiopia to escape recent clashes in the self-styled independent state of Somaliland, an official Ethiopian newspaper said Saturday. The Addis Zemen newspaper said 19,531 Somali refugees and displaced persons had sought refuge in Ethiopia and were currently living in five camps along the frontier. The Ethiopian government expressed dismay at the new arrivals at a time when there are already 185,000 refugees on its soil. The latest influx coincided with a week of clashes between the forces of the "president" of Somaliland, Mohammad Ebrahim Egeli, and troops loyal to his predecessor Abdul Rahman Ahmad Ali "Tuur", who founded the breakaway "republic of Somaliland" and was ousted in February 1993. Mr. Tuur now opposes independence for Somaliland and has rallied to one of Somalia's warlords, General Mohammad Farah Aideed. On Nov. 18, Mr. Egeli reported that attacks by rebel militias in Hargeisa, the main town of Somaliland had left 60 civilians and eight of his troops dead. Ethiopia has started a programme of voluntary repatriation for Somali refugees which is due to continue until the end of March but Addis Zemen says it has run into trouble and the local authorities in charge of looking after the refugees complain that the international community is not doing enough to solve the problem.

Baby born with single eye and no nose

CAIRO (AFP) — An Egyptian woman has given birth to a baby girl with a single eye planted in the middle of her face, the semi-official daily Al Ahram said Saturday. The child has no nose or eyebrows on her large, square face and her eye is set like a black point in the middle. Al Ahram published a photograph of the baby who is on a life support system and in a critical condition after being born to 40-year-old Enbaba Ahmad Tamam. Doctors, who say they have never come across such a case, believe the child's disfigurement could have been caused because her mother married her cousin, a practice which is very common in Egypt. The mother, who comes from the Beni Suef province, 130 kilometres south of Cairo, has already had six children and two miscarriages.

European defence officials visit UAE

ABU DHABI (R) — The Netherlands defence minister and senior officials from France and Britain are visiting the United Arab Emirates, the official Emirates News Agency (WAM) reported on Saturday. Dutch Defence Minister Joris Voorhoeve arrived in the UAE on Saturday and met senior officials, the agency said. It did not say how long he would stay or what he would discuss. France's army Chief of Staff Admiral Jacques Lanxade is also currently visiting the UAE, according to separate WAM reports, as an adviser to Britain's Defence Ministry. Embassy officials were not available to comment on the purpose of the visits, which are prior to the UAE's IDEX 95 Defence Exhibition in March next year. At the last IDEX in 1993, the UAE made a major order for French Leclerc battle tanks. Britain has some military personnel training the UAE's armed forces.

Ten die in floods in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Massive floods have killed at least 10 people in southwestern Iran and caused widespread damage in more than 20 cities around the country, state television announced Saturday. Torrential rains which have been falling since Tuesday and overflowing rivers in five provinces have caused infrastructural damage in 23 cities, it said. Bushehr, Kermanshah, Khuzestan, Lorestan and Hamedan — in south, southwestern and western Iran — were most affected. More than 700 villages have been surrounded by water and some 10,000 homes as well as thousands of hectares (acres) of farmlands have been inundated. Deputy Interior Minister Rassul Zargar said. Floods, caused by torrential rain, also hit the capital late Friday, notably the south and central districts of the city.

GCC countries discuss power grid

RIYADH (AP) — Ministers of power and water from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) met Saturday to discuss several proposals, including setting up a \$1.6 billion unified electricity grid. The grid would link Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar as part of the first phase of a joint programme. Oman and the United Arab Emirates, further south on the Arabian Peninsula, would be linked later. Recommendations of the ministers will be presented to the GCC heads of state when they meet for their annual summit conference, scheduled this year for Dec. 19-21 in Manama, Bahrain. Qatar has proposed a joint power plant, with the cost shared by all six GCC states. The ministers will review the initiative along with proposals on electricity and water usage. Almost all the GCC countries have started a drive recently to conserve power and water.

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:35 Abu Dhabi, Muscat (GF) 02:28 Cairo (MS) 02:28 Amsterdam (KL)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 6:00 a.m. every Monday 02:25 Moscow (SU) 02:25 Cairo (MS) 02:25 Berlin (ME) 02:25 Istanbul (TK) 01:10 Amsterdam (KL)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ)

Flights (Terminal 1)

05:30 Bangkok (RJ) 06:25 Jakarta (RJ) 06:30 Seoul (RJ) 06:30 Tokyo (RJ) 06:30 Seoul (



Prime Minister Abdulla Salam Majali Saturday meets with visiting Australian parliamentarian Tim Fischer (Petra photo)

Visiting Australian deputy discusses parliamentary, trade issues with officials

AMMAN (J.T.) — Visiting Australian parliamentarian Tim Fischer, who is also leader of the National Party of Australia, Saturday met with Prime Minister Abdulla Salam Majali, Speaker of Senate Ahmad Lawzi, Speaker of the House Sa'd Hayel Sour and senior government officials to discuss prospects for promoting trade and economic relations.

Dr. Majali briefed Mr. Fischer on the latest developments in the Middle East peace process and the Jordan-Israel peace treaty, and discussed scopes of cooperation between Jordan and Australia in several economic, scientific and trade arenas.

Mr. Fischer, who arrived from Israel Thursday on a four-day visit to Jordan, met earlier with Ammar Husseini, secretary general of the Amman Chamber of Commerce and discussed prospects of direct commercial flights between Australia and Jordan.

He also met with Minister of Industry and Trade Secretary General Mohammad Simadi and discussed convening the joint Jordanian-Australian trade committee meeting in Amman in February 1995. Mr. Fischer, who is also shadow minister for trade in Australia, met with Senate Speaker Ahmad Lawzi to acquaint himself with Jordan's parliamentary affairs.

Mr. Fischer is expected to conclude his visit to Jordan today and fly to Lebanon.

By Rana Husseini and Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Students at the University of Jordan Saturday protested against examination regulations and threatened to boycott classes and organize further protests if negotiations with the university administration proved unfruitful.

According to university academic regulations, current examination regulations stipulate that those retaking courses they have failed can only attain a maximum of 60 per cent and at the same time, the failing grade would not be added to the students' grade point average.

"We did not demonstrate here today for political reasons, we only want our rights as students," said a student union member addressing a peaceful protest of men and women outside the Faculty of Economics and Commerce.

"We know that our university is among those prominent in Jordan, and we all want to obtain recognised degrees, and it is upon this that we have based our recommendations and demands."

he added.

The student union, which organised the protest, called upon all students to unite with them, and issued a list of demands asking the administration to adjust these regulations.

"Now the ball is in your court. You have elected us (the student union) and we represent you and your demands, but you too are responsible to determine whether or not these rules are changed," said another student to the outdoor gathering while other students not braving the cold listened from surrounding classrooms.

The student union has two proposals, either change the regulations, or at least increase the maximum percentage to 75 for students who braving the cold listened from surrounding classrooms.

"We would like to remind you that we are challenging the unjust regulations, we are not challenging the university president. But we want our demands met in full and we will not give up," he added.

Dean of Students' Affairs Dean of Students' Affairs Mohammad Khreisat defended the university position saying the students had no right to discuss academic regulations.

"The students who retake courses are less than 7 per cent (of the student body) and we can't change our regulations for this number,"

Dr. Khreisat told the Jordan Times late Wednesday.

One student from the crowd explained how he had provided a medical certificate to excuse him from taking an exam, but he said his teacher failed him. "I repeated the course and scored a 90 per cent, but because of the rules my grade was recorded as 60 per cent," the student said.

The student union has two proposals, either change the regulations, or at least increase the maximum percentage to 75 for students who braving the cold listened from surrounding classrooms.

"We are going to distribute a petition to be signed by all students in support of our demands to be handed to the administration on Monday evening," said a protest organiser at the end of the 30-minute demonstration. Dr. Khreisat said the university administration and representatives of the students union would meet today to discuss the issue.

It found guilty, the men, most of them in their mid-20s, could be sentenced to death.

'Arab Afghans' to be sentenced on Dec. 7

AMMAN (AP) — Twenty-five people implicated in a campaign to destabilise the Kingdom with a spate of bombings and assassination plots will be sentenced on Dec. 7, the state Security Court announced Saturday.

The three-man tribunal convened for a few minutes Saturday to announce the date for both the verdicts and sentencing after the prosecution and defence concluded their cases.

Since the trial began Aug. 27, the prosecution has produced confessions, evidence and witnesses against the defendants, three of whom are being tried in absentia after evading a security crackdown in February that resulted in their arrests.

The others were rounded up after several bombings across the country which targeted mainly movie theatres showing pornographic films and liquor stores. They also have been charged with plotting to kill politicians involved in peace talks with Israel and attack Western targets.

The prosecution said that they were financed by Osama Ben Laden, a Saudi Arabian millionaire of Yemeni origin who shifted his banking operations in Afghanistan to Muslim countries after the end of the Afghan war.

Mr. Ben Laden, who is believed to be living in Sudan, allegedly is also attacking extremists in Egypt and Algeria seeking to overthrow these regimes and replace them with puritanical Islamic governments.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

★ Film entitled "Operation Petticoat" at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

CONCERT

★ Concert at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

CHARITY BAZAAR

★ Charity bazaar (includes books, tapes, clothes, and accessories) at Mu'tah University.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibit entitled "Signs and Symbols: Communication and Interpretation from the Brandywine Workshop" at the American Center.

★ Ceramics exhibition by Mahmoud Taha at Darat Al Funun.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Majali to visit new IDB head

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdulla Salam Majali Sunday will visit the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) to meet with its newly-appointed general manager, Rajab Al Saad. Mr. Saad succeeded Taher Kanaan as the bank's new general manager. Since 1973 until his appointment, Mr. Saad was the bank's deputy general manager.

Jordan to attend ISESCO meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will participate in the fifth session of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) which will open in Damascus Sunday. Jordan will be represented at the meeting by Minister of Education Abdul Raouf Rawab.

deh who left for the Syrian capital Saturday. The four-day conference will discuss several issues related to the organisation's three-year plan, the conditions of the holy city of Jerusalem under Israeli occupation and ISESCO's role in supporting cultural and educational organisations in member states.

House environment panel considers amending laws

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament Health and Environmental Safety Committee Saturday discussed ways of revising and updating related legislation. The committee, meeting under Chairman Deputy Ahmad Qudah, decided to ask the minister of health to supply the committee with information on health services offered in Jordan by the private and public sectors.

French manufacturers seek joint projects

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Thirty French manufacturers and exporters seeking export orders as well as agency arrangements and technology transfer Saturday opened an exhibition in Amman in what French officials described as an event that would help boost Franco-Jordanian business links.

The exhibition, opened by Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Lawzi at Philadelphia Hotel, includes several key sectors of high importance to Jordan — water technology, agriculture, construction and foodstuffs — as well as computers, packaging industries and hospital furniture.

Most of the companies represented in the exhibition come from Montpellier in southern France under the umbrella of a regional chamber of commerce.

It is the second French commercial exhibition of its kind to be held in Jordan organised by the Montpellier-based SAM International Trade headed by a French-Arab, Nadia Manchet.

Ms. Manchet organised the first exhibition of French medical equipment and related products in Amman in April and plans to organise a broader one in 1995 with the participation of two chambers of commerce in France. Only 15 firms were represented

in that event.

Cooperating with SAM International for the current event is local firm, Somer Company Limited for Projects, Trade and Agencies.

Addressing a press conference early Saturday, Ms. Manchet and Dominique Guy-Chevanne said French industries and exporters were taking strong interest in setting up business links with Jordan, particularly after the signing of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

They said the current exhibition was mainly aimed at the Jordanian market, and expanding its reach to other areas and countries in the region through the Kingdom was not an immediate priority.

However, both of them expressed confidence that Jordan could grow to be a key link in regional trade as peace takes hold in the Middle East.

Michel Duger, economic counsellor at the French embassy, told the press conference that French firms did not appear to be too keen on developing joint ventures with Jordanian firms if only because of the small size of the Jordanian market.

However, Ms. Guy-Chevanne noted that the Montpellier region of France had a population of only two million, and many of the companies in the area felt that Jordan, with a population of four million, was good enough for a start.

Schate Speaker Ahmad Lawzi Saturday views French products on display at an exhibition he opened at Philadelphia Hotel (Petra photo)

Agab in addition to silos in Russia.

French exports to Jordan totalled \$200 million in 1993; this year the figure is expected to go up by more than 10 per cent.

Jordan's exports to France amounted to around \$2 million, according to the Department of Statistics.

Exhibitors in the week-long display include manufacturers and producers of water and waste treatment plants, medical instruments, construction materials, agricultural machinery, cosmetics, fruits, fruit juices, foundation treatment equipment, maps, clothes, communication equipment, motors and pumps, filters, hospital furniture, fertilisers, electric power generators, computers and packaging as well as Renault cars.

The firms' representatives will also be holding talks with government officials as well as private sector organisations to explore and develop means to transfer technology and set up agency arrangements, Mr. Duger said.



Participants in the road safety seminar, which opened in Amman Saturday, attend the opening session.

Sweden's methods of traffic control.

Major General Muayyad Mubaslat, assistant PSD director for traffic affairs, opened the meeting saying that the PSD was taking every possible measure to deal with traffic issues.

Several working papers to be reviewed at the seminar

Road safety seminar looks at Swedish experience

AMMAN (J.T.) — Swedish Ambassador to Jordan Christian Bausch Saturday said that his country was intent on contributing towards Jordan's efforts to deal with the chronic issue of road accidents and traffic problems.

Speaking at the opening of a two-week training seminar on road safety organised by the Traffic Department, the ambassador said that Sweden has provided traffic and road safety experts to help the Traffic Department cope with related problems.

According to the ambassador, the traffic problems result from three elements: motorists and pedestrians who use the roads, and the condition of vehicles and roads, noting that accidents, which are increasing in number annually, costing the

State witnesses, mostly police officers, testified that primitive explosive devices that were seized from the homes of some of the defendants matched those that had exploded in Jordan in late 1993 and early this year.

Five defendants maintain they are innocent. The rest have pleaded guilty.

Some of the defendants have retracted pre-trial confessions, claiming they were extracted under duress.

The accused are known as "Arab Afghans," a nickname given to volunteers who fought along with the Afghan Mujahideen against the Soviet army in the 1980-1990 Afghan war.

The prosecution said that they were financed by Osama Ben Laden, a Saudi Arabian millionaire of Yemeni origin who shifted his banking operations in Afghanistan to Muslim countries after the end of the Afghan war.

Mr. Ben Laden, who is believed to be living in Sudan, allegedly is also attacking extremists in Egypt and Algeria seeking to overthrow these regimes and replace them with puritanical Islamic governments.

At the ceremony, the PSD director for traffic affairs, the agreement aims to coordinate cooperation between the two universities in the exchange of teaching staff, scholars and researchers and defining fields of common interests among Jordanian universities and others participating in UNIMED programmes.

In Jordan only the University of Jordan and Al Bayt University are members of the UNIMED group of 51 universities in the Mediterranean region.

UNIMED is sponsored and financed by the European Union (EU).

Speaking in an opening address at the meeting of the UNIMED higher committee, Chaiman of the

Architectural Engineering Department at the University of Jordan Kamel Mahadini, who represents UNIMED at the meeting, said the centre will have a major role in

attracting the best of the region's professors for academic research and cooperation.

He said it will also provide an opportunity to Jordanian universities' academic departments to join UNIMED's research networks.

Also Saturday, the UNIMED delegation, accompanied by Dr. Gharaibeh, was received by Prime Minister Abdulla Salam Majali, a former University of Jordan president himself.

Dr. Majali was briefed by the visiting delegation on UNIMED's goals aiming to enhance cooperation between the region's universities in the fields of the environment, science, engineering, agriculture, economy, literature, arts and architecture.

The prime minister said Jordan was always keen to cooperate with scientific and academic institutions, especially those in the Mediterranean region.

Chaiman of the

Architectural Engineering Department at the University of Jordan Kamel Mahadini, who represents UNIMED at the meeting, said the centre will have a major role in

ports to Holland rose from JD 25,000 in 1983 to JD 10 million last year.

Jordan imports mainly live cattle, fresh meat, milk, cheese, seeds, cooking fat and oil and exports phosphate, potash and limited shipments of fruits and vegetables.

Mr. Asfour said he hoped that joint ventures would play a role in helping to adjust the balance of trade between the two countries and create new jobs in Jordan.

The chamber statement said that the Dutch delegation was expected to meet with Jordanian businesspersons and tour industries in the country.

Commerce group seeks expanded cooperation with Dutch businesses

AMMAN (Petra) — Amman Chamber of Commerce Chairman Mohammad Asfour Saturday said that Jordan looks forward to joint economic ventures with the Netherlands, but added that he hoped that cooperation would not be confined to providing Dutch technical and administrative assistance to the Kingdom.

Speaking at a meeting with a visiting Dutch trade delegation, Mr. Asfour said he would like to see active participation and partnership in economic schemes and Dutch assistance in opening new markets for Jordanian goods in the European countries.

A spokesman for the Dutch team told Mr. Asfour that his country was eager to advance economic ties with Jordan, especially in the new era of peace and as Jordan is playing a key role in the Middle East. The visiting delegation welcomed ideas from the Jordanian business community aimed at increasing bilateral economic and trade ties.

The Dutch team groups representatives of food and other industries who are here to explore areas for joint investments, according to a chamber statement.

The statement said that Jordan's imports from the Netherlands rose from JD 24 million in 1983 to JD 62 million this year, while exports

to Holland rose from JD 25,000 in 1983 to JD 10 million last year.

Opposition claims to have seized power in Chechenya

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Opposition forces claimed Saturday to have seized power in the former Soviet Republic of Chechenya, after a bloody battle in the capital Grozny, Russian news agencies reported.

Umar Avtukhanov, the chairman of the opposition Provisional Council said opposition forces had taken power from President Dzhokhar Dudayev, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

A Dudayev government spokesman said however that the opposition tank assault had failed and that 20 rebels had been killed and that 20 of the force's 30 armoured vehicles had been destroyed, Interfax News Agency reported.

The fierce battle that started early Saturday centred around the presidential palace, which government forces successfully defended.

There was also fighting around the television tower and the Department of Security, Interfax said quoting the government chief of staff.

The Russian Federal Counter-Intelligence Service told Interfax in Moscow that the television tower had been taken by the opposition. But the government chief of staff said government forces had retaken the vital installation.

The opposition forces, armed and paid by Russia, penetrated the capital of the breakaway republic and appeared to be taking the upper hand after four hours of fighting, an AFP correspondent reported from Grozny.

Opposition units could be seen controlling the major

entrances to Grozny and were attacking the city centre from three directions, he said.

Mr. Dudayev, a former Soviet Air Force general who declared this mostly Muslim Caucasus Republic independent from Russia in 1991, was directing his forces from the presidential palace, Interfax News Agency said, giving no source.

But the opposition appeared to dominate the city after committing its full force of about 2,500 men, 20 tanks and about 15 other armoured vehicles to the offensive, which began with a massive helicopter attack on the city outskirts Friday.

Mr. Dudayev's forces numbered an estimated 1,200 men, including those holed up around the presidential palace, where four dead soldiers and three destroyed armoured cars could be seen.

Opposition spokesman Russian Maratov said early Saturday his forces had taken control of the internal security and interior ministries, although this was denied by government spokesmen, Russian news agencies reported.

No aircraft were seen in the latest fighting which began early in the morning.

But Mr. Dudayev's vice president, Zelyimhan Yandarbiyev, said five opposition helicopters had attacked during the fighting, Interfax reported.

On Friday 40 helicopter gunships bearing Russian markings pounded the Grozny Airport and other government-held positions, according to Russian news agencies.

The offensive by the pro-

Russian opposition, which has suffered in the past from a lack of cohesion between three main rival factions, was being led by Beslan Gantemirov.

The streets rang with the hammer of machinegun fire, two buses were burned out and almost no civilians ventured outdoors, although a few audacious kiosk owners remained open near the battle area selling cigarettes and snacks.

Mr. Dudayev has been under massive pressure from Moscow and its allies within Chechenya since he was elected president in 1991 and immediately declared his oil-rich Muslim republic of 1.2 million people independent.

The opposition, grouped under what it calls the Provisional Council, admits to being funded and armed by Russia, but both the Council and Moscow deny Mr. Dudayev's accusations that Russian troops are taking part in the conflict.

Mr. Yandarbiyev also told Interfax that three Russian crews had been captured in Saturday's fighting, Interfax said.

The assault was the first time opposition troops had fought their way into the city centre after months of sporadic, low-level warfare.

Six rebels were killed and another 10 wounded in Grozny Saturday, ITAR-TASS said.

TASS quoted a spokesman for the Provisional Council as saying the losses were caused mainly by government snipers on the top of the presidential palace in central Grozny.

The offensive by the pro-



A Chechen soldier stands on an APC, guarding the presidential palace on the central square of Grozny, the capital of the secessionist Russian republic of Chechenya (AFP photo)

Party revolt against Major is seen crumbling

LONDON (R) — A party revolt against Prime Minister John Major over Europe was crumbling Saturday, but rebels showed their anger by accusing him of Nazi-style tactics and of making the government a laughing stock.

A small core of right-wing Conservative members of parliament had threatened a showdown with major Monday in a vote on a bill to boost Britain's payments to the European Union (EU).

But Mr. Major threatened he would call an election if they scuppered the bill and potential cabinet rivals for his job vowed not to stand in his way.

On Friday, an amendment to the bill was tabled by 18 defiant rebels — unlikely to be enough to defeat Mr. Major who can rely on Northern Irish allies to bolster his slim majority of 14 seats.

But amid claims that Conservative leaders were pressuring local branches effectively to sack any members of

parliament who rebelled, some appeared to back off, but angrily.

"The cabinet will win its vote Monday but in the process has made itself the laughing stock of the British people," Sir George Gardiner, one of the 18, told a party meeting.

Sir Nicholas Fairbairn, an outspoken critic of Mr. Major's record as leader, compared his drastic efforts to bring rebels into line with Nazi Germany.

"I am not going to see democracy have its face rubbed in the dirt, elected members of parliament treated like delegates to the Nuremberg rally in which they raise their hands and say 'heil Hitler,'" he told BBC Radio Scotland.

Bill Cash, a prominent rebel, played down widespread speculation that anti-European Conservative members of parliament would mount a leadership challenge against Mr. Major later in the week.

Rainier undergoes heart surgery

PARIS (R) — Prince Rainier of Monaco underwent heart bypass surgery Friday, the palace announced.

There was no immediate word on his condition following the operation.

The surgery was performed on Prince Rainier, who is 71 years old, on Friday afternoon at Monaco's Centre for Heart and Thoracic Medicine, according to a statement.

The decision to operate was made a few days ago by Dr. Jean-Joseph Pastor, the prince's long-time heart spe-

cialist, following a regular checkup, the statement said.

A bypass operation is usually carried out when the small blood vessels serving the heart muscle become blocked due to age and disease and are surgically replaced with healthy vessels grafted from another part of the body, such as the leg.

It appears likely that Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers, who survived an earlier attempt to oust her, will be replaced — probably by State Department spokesman Mike McCurry.

Lloyd Cutler, who was brought in temporarily as Mr.

Clinton's legal adviser and continues as a White House consultant, candidly acknowledges the need to overhaul the communications operation.

"One could argue that a more experienced press team, one that came from the ranks of journalists, and that the journalists trusted, should be brought in to replace the Clinton press team," Mr. Cutler said in an interview in the current issue of Columbia Journalism Review.

Ironically, the rise of Republicans to power has tempered some of the calls for a more massive shake-up of the administration, according to insiders.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher, whose days at the State Department appeared numbered earlier in the year, now is expected to remain in his post.

Officials say Mr. Clinton now has too many other more pressing concerns and no desire to add to the workload by nominating a new secretary of state — a process that would require confirmation hearings before a Senate Foreign Relations Committee headed by Senator Jesse Helms, a Clinton critic.

Alloyd Bentsen has denied speculation he was considering stepping down soon, economic adviser Robert Rubin has been mentioned as a possible successor.

Mr. Clinton will soon name a replacement for Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy, who announced his resignation following news reports he accepted gifts from companies regulated by his department.

Texas Governor Ann Richards, who on Nov. 8 lost her re-election bid to George Bush, the son of the former president, has been mentioned as a possible replacement for Mr. Espy.

Prince Rainier

DAKKA (R) — Radical Muslims threatened on Saturday to stop any new move by Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku to mediate in Bangladesh's political crisis, including blockading the capital's airport.

"We will resist any plan by Anyaoku (Anyaoku) to visit Bangladesh. We will besiege

the airport so he cannot enter the city," said Moulana Fazlul Huq Amin, leader of the United Action Council, in a statement.

"He has no business here."

Opposition forces said Chief Anyaoku would be welcome only if his ideas dovetailed with their persistent demands that the government step down and allow

neutral, caretaker administration to call early elections.

An official said Chief Anyaoku was prepared to return to Bangladesh after his envoy, Sir Ninian Stephen, failed to broker an agreement.

Sir Ninian left Dhaka Monday after five weeks of exhaustive, but unsuccessful, diplomacy.

Emeka (Anyaoku) has offered to make himself available for a second go in the mediation effort, but he made no definite proposal nor set any date."

The official said Chief Anyaoku made his offer in separate messages to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and main opposition leader Sheikh Hasina.

It is the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces cannot just use their empty hands to defend their territory... so we need arms to defend ourselves."

A senior defence official, who asked not to be identified, said the Russian-designed T-55 tanks and APCs had been bought cheaply.

"The price of each tank was less than a Toyota Land Cruiser," the official told AFP.

First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh recently told reporters that the Defence Ministry had been scouring the world for good deals on armaments.

He said the army planned to buy AK-47 guns and ammunition from South Africa. "South Africa got them from Namibia and they sell them very cheap," he said.

The government had also bought arms from the Seychelles, the prince said.

He added that 10 armoured personnel carriers (APCs) would also be arriving with the tanks, but re-

Clinton changes to deal with a new Washington

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton, who took office vowing change, is revising everything from his rhetoric to his staff as he faces a dramatically different political world in Washington.

Mr. Clinton, spending the Thanksgiving holiday weekend at Camp David, has been doing extensive soul-searching in the wake of elections that put Republicans in charge of both the House and Senate for the first time in more than 40 years.

"My job is to stand up for the interest of ordinary Americans," Mr. Clinton told reporters earlier in the week in defining his new role as a president whose fellow Democrats are in the minority.

"That's what I will do," he said. "I will do my very best to work with them (Republicans) where we can work together."

The words reflect a different, more humble Clinton. When he took office nearly two years ago, Mr. Clinton talked more ambitiously — about changing the world. Now the world of Washington has been changed.

Republicans will be in charge when the new Congress takes over in January, and Mr. Clinton is stressing its "centrist" side — the one that shares common ground with the new powerbrokers.

The ripples from the election are likely to wash away some of the players now in the administration — with White House political director Joan Baggett the first victim. Officials say her replacement soon will be announced.

It appears likely that Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers, who survived an earlier attempt to oust her, will be replaced — probably by State Department spokesman Mike McCurry.

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Clinton's legal adviser and continues as a White House consultant, candidly acknowledges the need to overhaul the communications operation.

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Prince Rainier

E. Timor governor urges end to unrest

JAKARTA (AFP) — The governor of East Timor to an end to the unrest which has plagued the former Portuguese colony since Nov. 12, the third anniversary of a massacre of East Timorese protesters by Indonesian troops.

Speaking to a gathering of 15,000 people in the territory's main city Dili, Governor Abilio Jose Sooso Soares called the unrest "a disturbing development" undertaken by a minority of East Timorese, police and military sources said.

Speaking here at the annual congress in PWV province of his National Party (NP), Mr. De Klerk indicated that the NP, which holds seven posts in the 29-seat multiparty cabinet, would call for the introduction of full majority rule from 1999.

But, he added, the party will in the interim seek to increase its share of the vote to ensure a healthy balance of power and will push for mechanisms that will protect minority interests.

The congress marks the

first real appraisal by the NP of its role in government since it lost power to President Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) in historic all-race elections in April.

South Africa's current interim constitution allows the second and third biggest parties to hold cabinet seats, but the ANC has said it will demand the scrapping of this arrangement when the drafting of the final constitution begins next year.

After his address to the 650 Congress delegates, Mr. De Klerk told a press conference the NP will support this position — so terminating the five-year sunset clause which gives minority parties executive powers.

"We are not married to the rigorous form of power-sharing as it is now in the

cabinet," Mr. De Klerk said. He rejected what he called the "lose-lose" Westminster system, suggesting that the proportional representation electoral system could still be a feature of South African politics in the future.

"There are other mechanisms we can use," Mr. De Klerk said.

"For example, if a party gets more than 50 per cent of the vote, it should form a cabinet, but you could write into the constitution that decisions on (certain key issues) will not be finalised by the cabinet but by another body which is more representative."

Mr. De Klerk rebuffed criticism by delegates that the NP had assumed too low a profile since the elections and had allowed Mr. Mandela to hog the limelight.

"We will resist any plan by Anyaoku (Anyaoku) to visit Bangladesh. We will besiege

the airport so he cannot enter the city," said Moulana Fazlul Huq Amin, leader of the United Action Council, in a statement.

"He has no business here."

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neutral, caretaker administration to call early elections.

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The official said Chief Anyaoku made his offer in separate messages to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and main opposition leader Sheikh Hasina.

It is the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces cannot just use their empty hands to defend their territory... so we need arms to defend ourselves."

A senior defence official, who asked not to be identified, said the Russian-designed T-55 tanks and APCs had been bought cheaply.

"The price of each tank was less than a Toyota Land Cruiser," the official told AFP.

Cambodians have little sympathy for Thais who continue to do business with the Khmer Rouge and General Savoeun said the massacre revealed the insurgents' true nature.

"It's the Khmer Rouge's nature. They not only kill them (Thais) but also Thais," he said.

"It's a warning that they (Thais) should not deal with the Khmer Rouge any longer."

Meanwhile, Cambodian co-Defence Minister Tea Banh said Saturday that the military had recently purchased 40 tanks from the Czech Republic and another 50

Roger Moore's
wife denies
marriage rift

Situation in Bihac critical as rivals fight near hospital

SARAJEVO (R) — Muslim and Serb forces fought close to a hospital crowded with war wounded in Bihac town Saturday and United Nations peacekeepers described the situation in the U.N.-designated "safe area" as critical.

The Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) gave the town's government defenders an ultimatum to surrender by 8 p.m. (1900 GMT) after capturing up to 25 per cent of the U.N.-protected zone around it.

U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) spokesman Jan-Dirk Merveldt said fight-

ing erupted during Saturday morning on the edge of the safe area two kilometres from the hospital and added:

"If you were in the hospital, you would hear and feel it and you might perhaps think you were in the middle of it."

Conditions for about 70,000 Muslim civilians in the northwestern Bosnian town were increasingly desperate.

Colum Murphy, deputy head of UNPROFOR civil affairs, told reporters that peacekeeping efforts had reached a crunch point. "I won't hide from you the fact

that this certainly is a critical time."

The Serbs, undeterred by NATO air strikes, said they had encircled Bihac town with only one road left open to allow refugees to flee north to safer Muslim-held territory.

Families who wanted to escape were charged 50 German marks (\$35) a litre for blackmarket fuel when they could find it.

Front lines between the two sides were unchanged during the night despite some shelling and other exchanges

of fire but U.N. peacekeepers said the satellite village of Vedro Polje was added to Serb gains Friday.

General Matko Milovanovic, commanding the Bosnian Serb tank and artillery onslaught on the enclave, set the surrender deadline on Friday night.

He guaranteed the safety of civilians and of soldiers of the government army's 5th Corps who laid down their rifles.

Gen. Milovanovic promised not to harm General Atif Dudakovic, commander of the Bosnian army 5th Corps in Bihac, if he joined the surrender but added: "If he rejects (the ultimatum), he will be fully responsible for the suffering of his troops."

The U.N. saw the ultimatum as a threat to over-run Bihac, an act of defiance from which Serbs avoided in previous assaults on safe areas such as Gorazde and Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia.

It would be the most serious challenge to their authority that U.N. countries have faced in efforts to restore peace in Bosnia after 32 months of fighting.

UNPROFOR's Murphy said U.N. diplomatic efforts Saturday would be intense and continuous on the part of senior U.N. officials who were concerned that a turning point might have been reached in the conflict.

"It is quite clear we have

failed to deter an attack on the safe area," he added.

"What we do about it now is

the important thing. Clearly

all of us have failed up to this point."

Serb political leaders increased pressure on the Bosnian government to accept a permanent ceasefire across



A radio operator (right) speaks from the Bosnian presidency to people in Bihac. According to Radio Bihac the fighting is

continuing in the Bosnian enclave despite an earlier agreed ceasefire. (AFP photo)

the country.

Gen. Milovanovic, a hard-line member of the Bosnian Serb leadership, said: "If the Muslims reject our offer, the only thing we can do is to declare a state of war on our entire territory and finally defeat the enemy."

The Bosnian government in Sarajevo is ready to sign only a three-month ceasefire, worried that anything longer might help the Serbs keep all of the 70 per cent of Bosnia they now hold.

The United States, keen to take a tougher line against the Serbs but unable to persuade its West European and Russian allies to follow suit, stepped up its own military presence in the Balkan region.

U.N. Undersecretary-General Kofi Annan said in New York: "I suspect the planes will be back tomorrow (Saturday)."

The U.S. Defence Department ordered 2,000 Marines and sailors with three amphibious ships to deploy in the Adriatic Sea off Bosnia. "The move, which is strictly

precautionary, is a prudent measure to enhance the capabilities of our forces supporting the U.N. given the continuing hostilities in the region," Pentagon spokesman said.

No U.S. soldier has set foot on Bosnian soil so far in the war where the burden of peacekeeping has fallen mainly on Britain and France.

A senior U.N. source hinted that NATO warplanes could be in action again against Serb forces around Bihac after being fired on by surface-to-air missiles Friday night.

U.N. Undersecretary-General Kofi Annan said in New York: "I suspect the planes will be back tomorrow (Saturday)."

NATO hit the Serbs with three big air raids this week at the U.N.'s request.

Yasushi Akashi, the senior U.N. representative in for-

mer Yugoslavia said there was "large risk of collateral damage to civilians" from air strikes as the fighting reached the town.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev warned Friday that further NATO military involvement in and around Bosnia could undermine international peacekeeping efforts.

Mr. Kozyrev, who was due in Belgrade to meet Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, said Moscow would oppose a U.S. plan to widen the safe area around the town of Bihac.

Bosnian Serbs issued an air raid alert Saturday in western areas of the country they control, according to rebel Bosnian Serb television monitored for their lives.

There were a number of explosions on the town's main thoroughfare, known as "Sniper's Alley", and sniping was recorded in different points.

A 37-year-old man, Sadik Kablar, was wounded in the leg.

Nikola Koljevic (centre), close side to Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, gestures as he peace talks at Sarajevo airport. Mr. Koljevic said that he proposed a ceasefire for all talks to journalists after the U.N.-mediated

peace talks at Sarajevo airport. Mr. Koljevic said that he proposed a ceasefire for all talks to journalists after the U.N.-mediated

Indian states start crucial polls

NEW DELHI (R) — Voting began in the south Indian state of Karnataka Saturday, starting two weeks of intense anxiety for Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao that could affect his future.

Only on Dec. 9 will results start flowing in from Karnataka and three other states voting for assemblies in election which are widely seen as a referendum on Mr. Rao's leadership and a pointer to the next general election.

Goa and Sikkim have already voted and the tough Chief Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan, who has changed the nature of Indian campaigning, has decreed that no counting will take place till after Andhra Pradesh ends voting on Dec. 6.

That is to ensure, he says, that results in one area do not influence voting in another.

It is the Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh votes that count for Mr. Rao and his Congress Party, which rules

both states.

Opinion polls, political analysts and even senior Congress officials say things are looking bad for the party in both states, despite cheery statements predicting certain victory from Mr. Rao and regional Congress leaders.

The minute the prime minister declared that these polls were not a referendum on his leadership, we knew we were in worse trouble than we thought," said one senior Congress official who asked not to be identified.

Predictions are complicated by Mr. Seshan's clampdown on irregularities that were an everyday feature of past elections.

He is scrutinising election expenses intensely, insisting all politicians stick to a strict code of conduct he has issued and providing heavy security that has almost eradicated the violence usually associated with election campaigns.

Political analysts say all this could lead to a higher

turnout, especially among women and low-caste people often too scared to go and vote.

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2 die in bomb attack on Pakistani mosque

LAHORE, Pakistan (R) — Masked motorcycle hurled a grenade into a mosque in the Pakistani city of Lahore Saturday, killing two worshippers and wounding 20, police and hospital sources said.

It was not immediately clear if the assault was revenge for a bus attack Friday in which seven Shi'ite Muslims were killed and 14 wounded near Jhelum town in Punjab province.

Police said the attack occurred when Sunni Muslim worshippers were preparing to recite afternoon prayers at a mosque near a police station in the central lower mall district of the provincial capital.

Police had earlier put the death toll at three, but hospital sources said two people had been killed and one was in very critical condition. Six others had head wounds.

Two masked youngsters drove up to the Bait-Ul-Islam Mosque on a motorcycle. One threw a Russian-made grenade at the congregation of about 50. They fired machine pistols at pursuers as they fled, police said.

The mosque can be entered from a bazaar and from a police station, but it was not known if any of the victims were police.

Tension was already running high between militant Shi'ite and Sunni organisations following Friday's bus attack.

A bus carrying Shi'ite Muslims was fired at from a close range by unidentified people riding a Pajero (four-wheel drive vehicle), a local police official said Saturday.

He said the Shi'ites were returning after dark from a conference in Lahore called by the militant Shi'ite Tehrik Jafria Pakistan (TJP) organisation.

Survivors joined by Shi'ites living in the area blocked the Lahore-Islamabad Highway, known as the Grand Trunk Road, all night. It reopened at 8:30 a.m. (0330 GMT), the official said.

No group has claimed responsibility for either attack.

In Rawalpindi, 10 people, including seven policemen, were wounded in a clash between police and members of another militant Shi'ite group, Sipah-I-Mohammad, Friday.

Police were trying to prevent Sipah-I-Mohammad supporters from moving into an area.

ROME (R) — Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi cast himself as the saviour of Italy as an opinion poll Saturday suggested sympathy was swinging towards him despite a corruption probe.

More than 300 supporters of the billionaire businessman demonstrated against the investigation at the offices of Milan's "clear hands" magistrates Saturday in a protest organised by Mr. Berlusconi's Forza Italia party and other groups.

It would be easy to say 'enough is enough,' to say 'We had it,' but then that sense of responsibility prevails. We have the eyes of the world upon us and if we do no wrong, Mr. Berlusconi has refused to resign over the affair.

He has instead called a cabinet meeting for Tuesday to try to rally his shaky six-month-old coalition — and primarily the combative Northern League party — around a programme for government over the coming months.

He will also meet trade unions Wednesday for talks which his aides believe should yield a compromise deal on his vital but unpopular cost-cutting 1995 budget and avert an eight-hour general strike set for Dec. 2.

The opposition has said it

wants Mr. Berlusconi to quit when the budget becomes law, a process that must be over by the end of this year.

The survey also showed respondents split down the middle on whether the magistrates, whose inquiries toppled Italy's corrupt old government, were using their office in a political plot to get Mr. Berlusconi.

The prime minister, who has failed and failed to rein in the magistrates since coming to power, denied Saturday that he was "at war" with the judiciary but repeated his charge that they were part of a conspiracy.

Referring to Saturday's demonstration at Milan's Palace of Justice and a second protest set for Sunday in the northern city of Turin, he said his mainly middle-class voters were ready to march on the streets to defend him.

"It is a way of showing solidarity for the leader who embodies their expectations, their enthusiasm, their hopes," Mr. Berlusconi told Corriere Della Sera newspaper.

The opposition has said it

Calm returns to Rwandan refugee camp

KINSHASA (R) — A Rwandan refugee camp in eastern Zaire, where 15 people were killed and 40 injured by Zairean troops Friday, was reported quiet Saturday but heavy firing was heard from an area a few kilometres away.

There was no news of a worker from the British humanitarian organisation Action Aid feared kidnapped during Friday's disturbances.

Aid workers said that the camp at Katale, north of

Goma, which houses 230,000 Rwandans refugees was quiet and that volunteers from aid organisations were returning to other camps in the area after being withdrawn Friday.

In London Action Aid said it was worried about what had happened to its volunteer, a driver, who disappeared with four local employees while driving a truck in an aid convoy heading for a refugee camp.

The organisation said:

Angola, UNITA trade truce violation allegations

JOHANNESBURG (R) — The Angolan government and rebel leader Jonas Savimbi's UNITA movement, five days into a fragile ceasefire aimed at ending their 19-year civil war, traded allegations of truce violations.

The radio said that since UNITA and the MPLA government signed a peace accord in Zambia Sunday government forces attacking Chigwero had killed about 200 civilians accused of backing UNITA.

UNITA radio also said that in the central province of Huambo government troops were massacring and robbing UNITA sympathisers in the villages of Catongo, Dondo and Chipipa.

Quoting a military communique, the news agency said 22 soldiers died when the helicopter crashed to the ground.

UNITA, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, denied the allegation in a radio broadcast, saying the helicopter must have crashed.

UNITA radio, monitored

"We don't know what happened — he could have been abducted or could have seen a dangerous situation and taken cover. Many of the drivers have been in Bosnia, are ex-army and can look after themselves but obviously we are very concerned for his safety and that of the others with him."

The sound of shooting was heard in the Rithuru area where soldiers from the defeated army of the former Rwandan government (FAR) returned to their homes.

The killings at the camp at Katale followed the death of a Zairean soldier.

Chinese city to fine residents for allowing

are quartered.

Katale shelters Rwandans who fled a civil war between regular Hutu army troops and the rebel, Tutsi-led, Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) from April to July.

Hundreds of thousands of Hutus escaped Rwanda for Zaire following an RPF victory in July and have yet to return to their homes.

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Jordan Times

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Inner city gets help

THE SYMBOLISM of the first ever pedestrian tunnel in Zarqa goes beyond the safety and comfort of the residents of the second largest city in the country. In terms of size and importance, Zarqa is second only to Amman. Yet it tops the list of Jordanian cities that are most neglected and even abused. Home to well over half a million Jordanians, it lacks so many services and developmental planning to the extent that its people had to endure until a couple of days ago the dangers and agonies of crossing its main avenue with considerable risk to their lives or nerves. Credit goes to the municipality of Amman and its dynamic Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi for coming to the rescue of Zarqa and its inhabitants by constructing the badly needed tunnel. The cooperative spirit demonstrated by the capital's municipality in this endeavour shows the way for additional cooperation between the cities and towns of the country. Amman is a richer city than Zarqa and endowed with so many amenities and services that are lacking in Zarqa, a mere twenty kilometres to the north-east. Thus the decision of Dr. Abbadi and his colleagues at the Amman municipality should serve as an example for such cooperation from now on.

It goes without saying that the security and well-being of Amman is directly affected by what goes on around it. Very soon and with phenomenal expansion in construction in the outskirts of the two cities, their suburbs will be connected and their residents living literally under the same roof.

With this prospect in mind, cities neighbouring Amman, such as Zarqa, Russeifah and Salt cannot continue to serve as the home for the less privileged Jordanians and the seat of poverty and deprivation; and that is why the capital would do well to take keen interest in improving their lot, whether through direct assistance or otherwise. Against this backdrop, Mayor Abbadi and his council have done the right thing when they moved to reverse the tide in Zarqa by offering its people some hope when there was little of it left. We can only salute them for taking the initiative on a matter that sooner or later would affect all Jordanians and their way of life.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

JAMAL AL SHAER, a columnist in Al Ra'i urged Jordanians to follow in the footsteps of Arab Israeli leaders and come to the aid of the Palestinians who are currently unable to solve their disputes in Gaza and the other self-rule areas. The writer said that the Palestine National Authority has no real authority despite the fact that its backers, Fatah, constitute the largest faction. Hamas is neither in a position to impose its will on the Palestinian people as it is smaller in size than Fatah and has limited influence, said the writer, adding that none of the people in Jordan would like to see the self-rule areas transformed into another Algeria, with the ruling authority cracking down on the opposition. What is really wanted at this stage, he said, is to see Hamas, Fatah and the other groups together forming a national authority based on the outcome of free and fair elections. Such authority, the writer added, would certainly have the real power to control the streets and bring back stability and security which are needed by the Palestinians to reconstruct the infrastructure of the institutions of the future Palestine state.

ISRAEL'S RECENT decision to create 30,000 housing units in six years around Jerusalem, as part of a settlement programme, clearly indicates the Israeli government's total disregard for the peace process and the peace treaties with the Arab states and the Palestinians, said Mahmoud Rimawi. Holy Jerusalem is part and parcel of the West Bank territory occupied since 1967, and in accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, Israel ought to withdraw from that part too in exchange for peace with the Arab countries, said the columnist in Al Ra'i daily. The planting of settlements, of course with U.S. financial assistance, is like planting mines in the path of any permanent and peaceful solution to the Palestine question, said Rimawi. The writer said that while Yitzhak Rabin is being granted a peace award in Europe, his actions on the ground speak of aggression and continued occupation of Arab lands. Indeed Mr. Rabin finds in the awards he gets an encouragement to pursue the same aggressive and oppressive policies Israel has followed since its establishment on Arab soil, added the writer.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Alternative homeland revived

ONE OF the main worries Jordanians always harboured was that Jordan, suddenly or gradually, violently or peacefully, may become a replacement homeland for the Palestinians, expelled from their own homeland to make room for Jewish immigrants.

One of the main reasons for which the majority of Jordanians supported the treaty of peace with Israel was to prevent the possibility of transforming Jordan into Palestine, which is obviously as dangerous to Palestine as it is dangerous to Jordan itself.

It is in the best interests of both Jordan and Palestine to avoid mixing the cards. Jordan is Jordan and Palestine is Palestine. Jordan belongs to the Jordanians and Palestine belongs to the Palestinians. The claim that there is no difference between Jordan and Palestine, or, for that matter, between the Jordanians and the Palestinians is an indirect call for the creation of an alternative homeland for the Palestinians in Jordan at the expense of Jordanians. The pan-Arab slogan that disguises such a call is meant to facilitate swallowing the plot and selling the idea that Jordan and Palestine are in effect one country and one people.

The question now is whether or not the peace treaty did in fact bury for ever the scheme of establishing a

Palestinian homeland at the expense of Jordan, as Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali repeatedly asserted. The fact is that the treaty may have eliminated one source of the danger, called the "transfer," i.e. having Israel expel the remaining Palestinians in the West Bank, depriving them of the chance to live in an independent state on their own soil on the pretext that they already have a state in Jordan.

But other sources of danger remain in place and fully operational. They justify more precaution, otherwise Jordanians have only themselves to blame in the future if they find themselves, at one point in time, stripped of their sovereignty and if Palestinians find themselves without political future or sovereignty except in Jordan.

In this respect we have to recall the important speech delivered by U.S. President Bill Clinton at the Jordanian Parliament last month. The president equated Jordan with America as a land for receiving immigrants and naturalising them as full-fledged citizens as a source of strength. He encouraged Jordan to continue functioning as a dumping area for those who flee their homeland or are expelled. He did not say that Americans are essentially a people of immigrants. The original, native Americans, were almost annihilated or suppressed by the newcomers, which makes the equation politically unacceptable to native Jordanians, over and above being impossible economically because of

the vast difference between America and Jordan in resources. America has all the natural resources. It only needs more manpower to create more wealth, while Jordan has no resources to support the present population, not even enough water for the basic population's needs.

Another warning sign came from the World Bank, which issued its report, "Peace and the Jordanian economy," in October. The report devoted a chapter to urban development and housing. It covered the question of refugees and displaced Palestinians in Jordan and went on to draft a financial budget for the upgrading of camps under three options: one with 15 per cent relocation, which will cost \$310 million, another with 10 per cent relocation, which will cost \$199 million, and a third option with no relocation, which will cost no more than \$65 million. The return of displaced Palestinians, according to the World Bank, is not an option that justifies consideration. Likewise, the World Bank all but ignored housing upon drafting a development plan for the West Bank or Gaza.

The conversion of Jordan into an alternative homeland for the Palestinians seems to be in progress. It is only a question of size of the meagre budget needed to improve the quality of life in the refugee camps and transform them into permanent towns.

Withdrawal of Israeli troops, better living conditions are key to peace in self-rule areas

By Pascal B. Karmy

The main, deep causes of the tragic inter-Palestinian fighting, which took place on Nov. 19 between the Palestine National Authority police on the one hand, and the Islamic Jihad and Hamas on the other are two-fold. The first is the slow implementation of the Oslo and Cairo accords of Sept. 13, 1993 and May 4, 1994 respectively, and the consequent tardy withdrawal of the Israeli army from the occupied territories; the second cause is due to the non-payment of the funds the donor countries had pledged to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in the wake of the Oslo accord. Only a trickle of those contributions is forthcoming, which is hardly sufficient to meet the day-to-day expenses the administration of the Gaza Strip, let alone the West Bank.

Let us consider somewhat cursorily the two causes and their corollaries. The Israeli army has only partly withdrawn from the Gaza Strip as it is still stationing in parts of it to protect some of the settlements illegally built there, against international law and particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. In addition, those settlements constitute an obstruction to peace, as they remain the targets of attack by the resistance fighters opposing the accords with Israel, and their existence there reminds the Gaza people of the hated Israeli occupation.

As to the West Bank, the Israeli army is still there in full force as the negotiations for its withdrawal or

redeployment have not yet started. The present repression by the Israeli army of the Palestinians continues to create hatred and resentment against Israel and its army in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

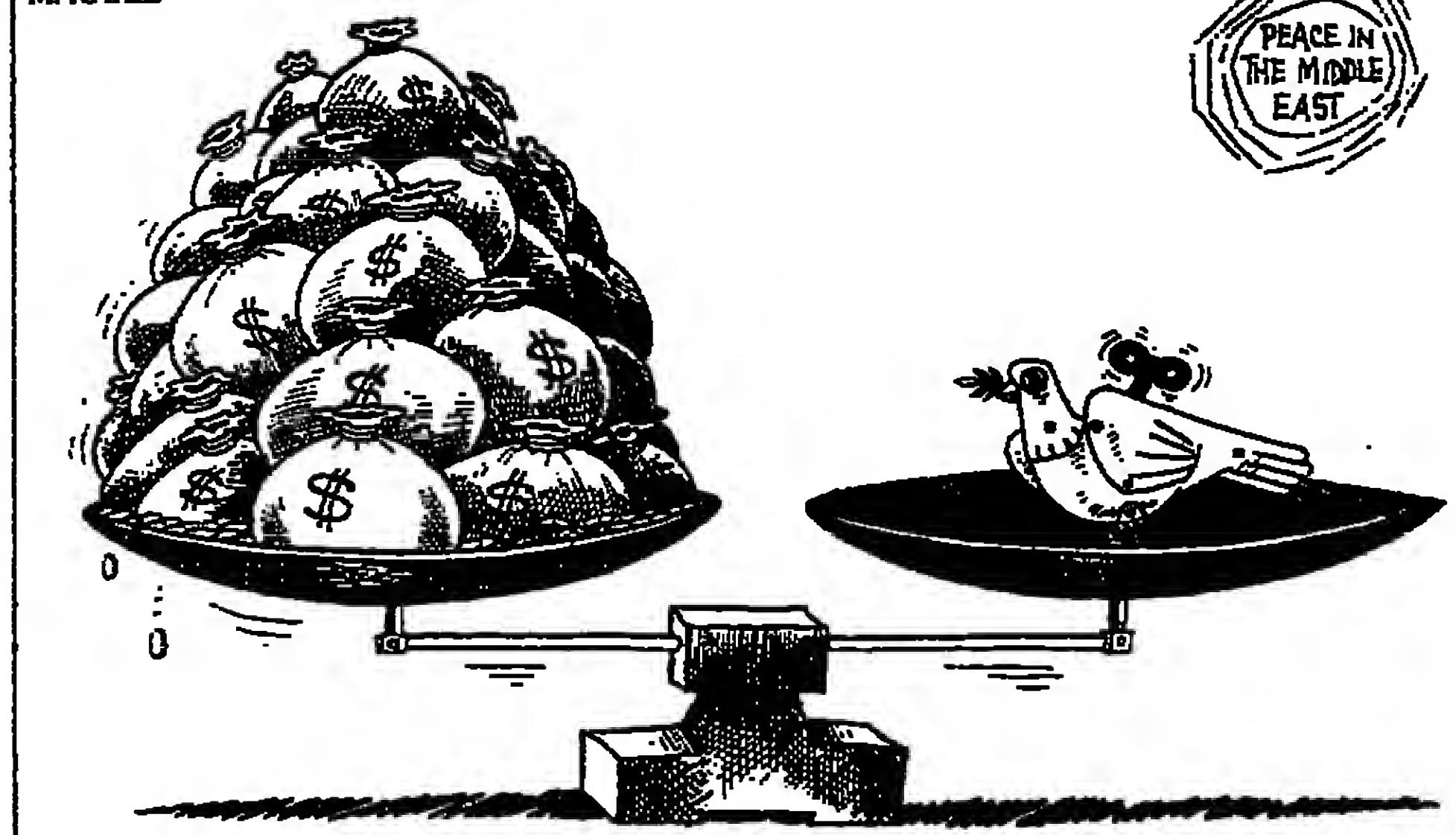
In order to remove the cause of resistance, the accords must be implemented speedily so as to expand the Palestinian autonomy in the occupied territories. But Israel is doing the contrary. Yasser Arafat has recently stated to the Egyptian Al Ahram newspaper correspondent that "the Israelis are still procrastinating as by now they are supposed to have withdrawn from the West Bank, to have redeployed their army and to have delivered empowerment authority to the Palestine National Authority (PNA)".

Not only that, but they are prevaricating at every turn of the negotiations and setting "new" conditions which the PNA is unable to fulfil "because they are sometimes beyond its control".

Recently, for example, Yitzhak Rabin declared in Washington that Israel will not allow elections for the Palestine Council (provided for in Article 1 of Oslo accord) until the Palestine National Council abrogates the provisions of the Palestine National Charter of 1965 which provide for the elimination of Israel and its replacement by one Palestine state, as it was under the British mandate, including Jews, Muslims and Christians.

It should be remarked however that the condition for the abrogation of these provisions is not stipulated anywhere in the Oslo

M. KAHIL



accord itself, only in the letters exchanged between Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat, dated Sept. 9, 1993. Then, no date has been fixed for effecting "the" abrogation and it could be done any time in the future. Moreover, Mr. Arafat is apparently trying, without success so far, to arrange for a meeting of the Palestine National Council. However, the convening of this council is most inappropriate and untimely under the present, tense circumstances prevailing in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The second important, indirect cause of the inter-Palestinian fighting is the non-payment of sufficient funds by the international donors so as to start work projects and thus improve the economic and living conditions of the people. The closing of the Gaza Strip and preventing Gaza workers from working in

daily administration. Such funds are required by the PNA, for a stronger reason: as it is in the process of building up a new administration and in fact a totally new mini-state.

The PNA is required to create jobs to the numerous skilled and unskilled unemployed labourers to enable them to earn their daily bread and make ends meet for their families. Hungry people without jobs or income will either beg, borrow money, steal or revolt against the established order as they have nothing to lose. It is especially the case in the impoverished Gaza Strip.

We must not lose sight of the fact that Israel's appalling, Nazi-like military occupation has literally destroyed the Gaza Strip and shattered the lives of the inhabitants. It has destroyed its infrastructure and has eliminated the educated cadre of Gaza's previous administration. Such funds are required by the PNA, for a stronger reason: as it is in the process of building up a new administration and in fact a totally new mini-state.

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N. Ireland peace sternest test process faces

By Andrew Hill
Reuter

DUBLIN — One year ago, Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds told his Fianna Fail Party faithful a Northern Ireland peace process would start by Christmas.

Twelve months later Mr. Reynolds has been toppled by a political crisis, Fianna Fail is fighting to stay in government and the peace process faces its sternest examination.

"This will be a critical time," said Michael Smyth, lecturer at the University of Ulster in Belfast. "It's difficult to see how the peace euphoria can continue."

Ceasefire in Northern Ireland by the Irish Republican Army, which fought for 25 years to end British rule of the province, and by Protestant loyalist gunmen who battled to maintain it, have ushered in an unprecedented era of peace.

But Irish, Northern Irish and British officials say the honeymoon of peace since the truce in September and October is almost over and a joint Anglo-Irish peace campaign is set to run into turbulence.

They foresee storms ahead when Britain holds exploratory talks with Sinn Fein, the IRA's political wing, for the first time and tries to lure Sinn Fein's political rivals in the Protestant camp to ...

negotiating table. Britain is likely to tell Sinn Fein there can be no full-scale negotiations until the IRA indicates willingness to surrender some of its stocks of guns, weapons and explosives.

But Sinn Fein has already made clear that it can only discuss such a move if Britain is willing to timetable a departure of 18,000 British troops from the province.

The London government says it cannot so long as there is a threat to security from hundred of tonnes of arms held both by the IRA and its loyalist adversaries.

Irish officials say Mr. Reynolds' demise is unlikely to radically change the determination of the Irish and British governments to find a solution to what has been a stain on the political map of western Europe for the past quarter of a century.

But Mr. Reynolds' departure will cause a subtle shift in emphasis since there are few on the Irish political landscape as determined as he was to bring Sinn Fein in from the cold.

"There's no-one around at the moment like Albert (Reynolds)," said a Dublin commentator who requested anonymity. "Whoever the next Taoiseach (prime minister) is, he will be much harder on Sinn Fein."

Irish officials say Mr. Reynolds' departure will cause a subtle shift in emphasis since there are few on the Irish political landscape as determined as he was to bring Sinn Fein in from the cold.

Mr. Reynolds recognised Sinn Fein one week after the IRA ceasefire but Britain's only concessions to the party have been to drop a broadcasting ban on its spokesman and an exclusion order on its president, Gerry Adams, from mainland Britain.

The Downing Street declaration did little to hasten the reunification of Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic from which it was partitioned seven decades ago, the central aim of Sinn Fein and the IRA.

Instead it said there could be no change to the province's status until a majority in the province wanted it. Mr. Adams gambled that that might be sooner rather than later if peace was the background to political negotiations.

But Britain has shown no public willingness to persuade its Protestant majority in the province, which wants to stay British, that their future lies in a united Ireland, as Sinn Fein wants.

This has left Sinn Fein, which commands a small 10 per cent of votes in Northern Ireland, in the position of a minority party with the guns of the IRA silenced.

"Sinn Fein has got nothing to show from all this peace process talk," said the University of Ulster's Smyth. "Unless it can get something from Britain it is difficult to see how Gerry Adams can

LETTERS

Need for change

To the Editor:

I am writing to praise you for your timely article, "Sexual harassment of women in public — time to speak out" (Jordan Times, Nov. 22, 1994).

The demeaning treatment women receive in public has been regarded as the fate of women living in this society — something a woman has to live with, to tolerate, but not to change. Whenever a woman complains, she is told that the man is not to blame because he is living in a sexually repressed society. Well, women also live in this society and yet manage to control themselves! This control exerted by women does not stem from a decreased sense of sexual frustration, but from conditioning at home. Subservient and "proper" social behaviour are hammered into a woman from birth in order for her to reach womanhood with an unsullied reputation. The result is a society of women ogled at and verbally and physically harassed by a growing number of men.

What a woman needs is a viable system to which she can and should resort. Even though we have law No. 320, we encompassing police force — maybe a special elite unit sympathetically to harassment complaints made by women. The incident in which the female journalist was grabbed by a policeman as she was interviewing his colleague is truly regrettable. Women should speak out and force our government to recognise this problem as an important domestic issue.

Nadine Shubailat,
P.O. Box 5180,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters writer's full name and preferable address as well. Names circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the manuscripts.

Features

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1994 7

Role of Jordanian media in limelight at 'Scientific Week'

By Rana Husseini and Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — On the first day of a week of presentations at the University of Jordan under the title "Scientific Week," the adaptation of the media in line with democratic rights was underlined in the initial session on Saturday.

Government domination of the ownership of local press is an obstacle to its freedom and creates frustration because of the unseen pressure that it evokes, said Ad Doustour editor-in-chief Nabil Sharif.

"The government owns 75 percent of Sawt Al Shaab, 60 percent of Al Ra'i and 40 percent of Ad Doustour. This is a high percentage although it is described as an investment operation," said Dr. Sharif.

According to the Press and Publication Law passed in 1993, the government should own less than 30 percent of any newspaper shares.

Other negative factors obstructing the path of Jordanian media include psychological and social pressures and the lack of information available to local journalists.

Dr. Sharif explained that psychologically, reporters feel that government opinion is the right and sole opinion; that there is a need to distinguish between the individual and his social background and that information is more readily available to foreign media services than local ones.

Reinforcing the last factor, Dr. Sharif said, "during the peace treaty we had to translate certain events from Israeli newspapers because government officials would not provide us with the information and we were heavily criticised by people."

"We hope that officials will change their view about local journalists and trust them more," said Dr. Sharif.

The press is a tool for changing and advancing the society, he said, and it is the watchdog for people and acts as the fourth authority. "but we are living in a transitional period, leaving behind former martial rule and moving toward democracy."

The second speaker of the morning session Brigadier General Qassem Saleh reaffirmed that media people had a role in the society to create awareness for the new generations.

"I challenge the Jordanian press to become more creative and to reflect the reality and the future in an optimistic way," he added.

The afternoon lecture considered the lack of women's participation in society in general and more specifically

German prosecutor slams Austria for freeing Syrian

BERLIN (AFP) — A leading Berlin judicial official has criticised Austria for releasing an arrested Syria former ambassador implicated in a deadly bombing in West Berlin linked to "Carlos, the Jackal."

The decision to release Faisal Summuk — who was Syrian ambassador to East Germany from 1981 to 1989 — on the grounds he was covered by diplomatic immunity was "deeply disappointing," Berlin public prosecutor Dieter Neumann said in an interview with the German weekly *Der Spiegel* due to appear Monday.

Mr. Summuk is suspected of involvement in the preparation of a bomb attack on the French cultural centre in West Berlin in August 1983 in which one person died and 23 were wounded. Carlos' group claimed responsibility.

Germany issued an international arrest warrant for Mr. Summuk last summer and requested his extradition from Austria following his arrest in Vienna on October 25 this year.

A Vienna court ruled on Thursday that Mr. Summuk was covered by diplomatic immunity and free to leave.

Mr. Neumann in the *Der Spiegel* interview denied that Mr. Summuk had accreditation which guaranteed diplomatic immunity at the time of his arrest. He said his information was that the diplomat had entered Austria on a tourist visa.

Mr. Summuk reportedly claimed immunity on the grounds he was in Austria at the invitation of the United Nations Organisation for Industrial Development which

in politics.

Factors attributed to this phenomenon included upbringing, illiteracy, tribal habits and the stereotypical view of women.

Attorney Asma Khader, a women's rights activist, blamed the minimum role of women in society on upbringing.

"Here the common stereotype is that women should stay away from politics and that their only role is in the home," she said.

According to Ms. Khader, women's participation does not exceed 0.5 percent in the public sector, and 1 percent in higher authority and barely reaches 17 percent participation in political parties.

Senator Husni Ayesh, the second speaker, said that illiteracy in women curtails her ambitions and affects the upbringing of her children.

The number of uneducated women in Jordan is double the number of men, and this also inhibits political participation at all levels, Senator Ayesh said.

He blamed internal conflicts within women's organisations for weakening their stand in political circles and added that "women should not seek equal opportunities with men, but should look for equal representation alongside men."

Deputy Toujan Faisal said that women need to know the importance of their involvement in politics.

"The problem is that most women don't know that politics affects other aspects of their lives — what they eat, prices and all areas of life," she said.

Ms. Faisal added that certain tribal traditions dictate appointment of men in preference to women.

Ms. Faisal said that the stereotyped position of women in the home discourages women from running for parliament.

"People are used to steering men in Parliament and cannot imagine women there as well... this affects the balance of our society and that is why it is backward," she said.

Today's presentations will cover one on democracy and political parties, presented by Senator and former Prime Minister Ahmad Obeidat. Lower House of Parliament Speaker Sa'd Hayel Sour will lecture on democracy in Jordan.

The evening session on press and democracy will be addressed by columnist Tareq Masarweh and President of the Institute of Diplomacy Mazen Arrouf.

By Emmanuel Thevenon

What do the thousands of primitive drawings decorating the "Valée des merveilles" (Valley of marvels) mean and who were the artists? After a century of investigations, the interpretations, from the wildest to those backed by the most arguments, followed one another to try to elucidate the mystery surrounding this great site of European prehistory.

A few kilometres from

Nice, above the little town of

Saint-Dalmas-de-Tende, a

visitor discovering the "Valée

des merveilles" is seized with

wonder at its grandios

sternity. In the limpid waters

of a series of lakes, the rag

ged mountain peaks and the

impressive jumble of great

blocks of stone are reflected.

There are frequent storms in

summer, particularly on the

highest peak of the site,

Mount Bego (2,873 metres)

with its sides rich in iron ore.

In this "great site in which

the spirit breathes," prehisto

ric men drew thousands of

primitive drawings (nearly

100,000 have been listed) on

slabs of schist, made comp

pletely smooth by the titanic

work of glaciers.

Each of the modest

looking pictures is made up

of a series of dots engraved

with a metal point. Very

sketchily, they represent sim

ple geometric figures (circles,

squares, ovals and triangles)

and, above all, objects or

animals characteristic of

farming activities (tools,

spearheads and ploughs,

oxen, bulls' heads, etc.

Emilia Masson, of the In

stitute of Semitic Studies at

the Collège de France, thinks

that this society was orga

nised following the social and

sacred hierarchy brought out

by Georges Dumézil in all

Indo-European societies.

Through its geometry, the

mountain would represent

the fundamental triad with,

at the summit, the supreme

god, master of the natural

elements; below him the god

of war, and, lower still, the

gods linked to the production

of goods.

A comparable division of

human society corresponds

to this repartition with, at the

top, the class of priests (the

anthropomorphic figures are

located not far from the sum

mit, then the warriors (rep

resented by the weapons) and

finally the peasants, the

craftsmen and the merchants,

occupying the lowest levels

(geometrical figures and

horns).

For the time being, none of

the numerous theories drawn

revealing his sex.

The wildest theories followed one another in an attempt to understand this profusion of signs in such a remote place and to find out which people did the drawings. Certain local traditions attribute these drawings as being *ex voto* by shepherds, dedicated to the monks who freed the place from the evil of the demon or of a witch. A scholar from the Romantic period even considered them as Phoenician inscriptions and thought that the schist slabs were the ruins of a monument to the glory of Hannibal.

Today, specialists consider

that the area of 10 square

kilometres around Mount

Bego must have been an im

portant place of pilgrimage

(the root "beg" means

"God" in Indo-European)

where, in the right season,

the peasants came to implore

their gods. However, inter

pretations as to the nature

of these gods vary. Most re

searchers think that, like other

neolithic peoples in the

Mediterranean basin, these

people worshipped the bull

god, master of thunderbolts

and of fertility. The

thousands of prayers en

graved on the rocks would

seem to be addressed to this

western Zeus calling down

his goodness upon the houses

and the fields (geometrical

figures), the flocks and herds

(horned figures), the labours

of the soil and the harvests

(scenes of ploughing, scythes,

etc.).

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Privatisation in Arab Gulf states will take time — economist

MANAMA (R) — Privatisation, a buzz word in Arab Gulf states, was likely to be a gradual and lengthy process in a region where economies are so far driven by public spending, according to a leading Saudi-based economist.

Henry Azzam, chief economist at Saudi Arabia's National Commercial Bank (NCB), played down expectations of early privatisation and said schemes could take between three and eight years to be initiated and completed.

Mr. Azzam's remarks in a paper at a privatisation seminar highlighted new interest by Gulf governments, hit by weak oil prices and facing budget deficits, in harnessing the wealth of a growing middle class.

But he said the private sector in Arab Gulf states only accounted for 30 to 40 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).

"Some governments no longer have the capital resources needed to finance new projects such as power

stations, desalination plants, airline fleet expansion and telecommunications facilities. Private capital has become the only way to make sure that these projects are implemented," Mr. Azzam said.

He said privatisation created certain concerns in the

main concern was employment "since over-staffed public sector entities would have to make people redundant when privatised in order to reduce costs and improve efficiency."

"A number of solutions have been proposed, including using the proceeds from privatisation to retain national work force and absorb the excess labour in private sector establishments. Part of the proceeds could also be allocated to provide for early retirement, adequate severance pay, unemployment benefits and job search assistance," Mr. Azzam elaborated.

But he argued the long-term effects on employment

should be beneficial. Other concerns include a loss of government control, possible higher prices for consumers, how to value public sector industries offered for sale and the likelihood that such offers may depress stock market prices.

Governments should gradually unload shares of profitable companies, consider other privatisation mechanisms including build, operate and transfer (BOT) and privatising management or leasing out to the private sector, Mr. Azzam said.

Many concerns may be partly addressed by retaining some government ownership and introducing effective regulation.

He called for fully-fledged stock markets in a region where trading floors are rare and stock trading is often restricted.

"Fully functioning stock markets supported with... necessary legislative infrastructure and sophisticated financial services" were important for the success of

privatisation, he said. At the end of 1993, total stock market capitalisation in the region was estimated at \$77.5 billion of which Saudi Arabia accounted for nearly 66 per cent. Stock market capitalisation stood at around 40 per cent of GDP in the Gulf states compared with 50 per cent in other developing countries.

Mr. Azzam said a 20 per cent drop in the Saudi stock market this year "suggests that for the time being, there is no sufficient demand to support large-scale government asset sales."

He said privatisation of key wholly-owned Saudi state firms was unlikely to take place in 1995 and the prospects were for the whole programme to be implemented over a longer time span.

The state was likely to reduce gradually its share in 37 companies, whose shares are traded on the market, with a total capital of 56.3 billion riyals (\$15 billion), he added.

UAE looks to former communists for investment

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is looking to Russia and other former communist nations as possible investment markets, as part of diversification plans aimed at offsetting losses from unstable markets in other countries.

Officials from the UAE, a key OPEC oil producer, discussed new investment in banking, oil and other sectors with delegations from Russia, Poland and the Czech Republic this week.

They said they would visit those countries to explore potential projects.

"A UAE delegation has agreed to visit Moscow soon to discuss setting up joint banking ventures in Russia," said Russian deputy prime minister, Oleg Davydov, who accompanied Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin during a ground-breaking visit to the UAE and three other oil-rich Gulf nations this week.

Official UAE sources said the delegation would comprise businessmen and bankers, and that discussions in Moscow would also cover investment in oil and gas.

Another delegation from the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA), the emirate's main overseas investment arm, and from the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry would go to the Czech Republic for similar talks.

Officials from those two institutions have promised to visit our country and study investment opportunities there," Czech Finance and Industry Minister, Vladimir Dolhi was quoted as saying by local press Friday.

Mr. Dolhi paid a three-day visit to the UAE this week during which he signed an agreement to protect and guarantee investment. It was requested by the UAE, which has finalised similar pacts with more than 30 countries.

The two countries are also negotiating a draft pact on avoiding double taxation, officials said. Russia and the UAE also plan to sign an investment and tax accord to push ahead with their four-year-old economic agreement.

Mr. Dolhi did not say what the UAE delegation would discuss but noted his country was planning to privatise its refining sector as part of its switch to a market economy. He said refining output capacity was estimated at around 10 million tonnes a year (200,000 barrels per day).

"There are great investment opportunities for potential investors from the UAE and other Gulf states, especially in refining and petrochemicals," he said.

No precise figures are available on the UAE's assets abroad but bankers estimate them at between \$25 billion and \$50 billion. They are concentrated in the West in stocks, real estate and bank deposits.

Bankers said the UAE and other Gulf countries had suffered losses from recent upheavals in world stock markets and exchange and interest rates.

Gulf officials have said they were looking for new markets in Asia, the former Soviet Union and East Europe, especially in downstream investment.

The UAE, seeking new markets for its growing oil

sectors, has launched a drive to join Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in setting up an overseas downstream empire and officials have said they were considering some major projects.

One of the projects has already been signed with Austria's energy giant OMV A.G. The \$450 million deal was signed in May and allowed Abu Dhabi, the UAE's main oil producer, to own 20 per cent of the group.

Abu Dhabi's other main downstream venture was signed eight years ago with Cepsa, Spain's main refining and petrochemical company. The deal, worth around \$120 million, gave Abu Dhabi access to 15 per cent of the company and allowed it to market more than 60,000 b/d of crude.

Poland and Romania have also made investment offers to the UAE in their refining sector but no agreement has been reached. Polish Prime Minister, Waldemar Pawlak discussed investments during a visit to the Emirates this week, in which he also signed scientific and aviation accords.

Indian reforms win World Economic Forum confidence

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's commitment to economic liberalisation won a cautious vote of confidence Tuesday from the World Economic Forum, which warned that it could not afford to slacken the pace of reform.

At the end of its annual two-day India meeting here, the Geneva-based organisation called for urgent labour reforms, big customs duty cuts and a vast improvement in infrastructure such as power and communications.

Former French prime minister Raymond Barre said the forum, which promotes interaction between governments and businesses, saw a perceptible change in the national mood since the reforms were launched in 1991 amid scepticism.

"There is a clear commitment in various parts of the country and society to reform," Mr. Barre said, adding that Indians had realised the "dynamism of a market economy."

But he warned that India needed to keep up the momentum of change and not become complacent following an economic turnaround in the past 40 months.

"It is necessary to go on with the policy of reform... It is not possible for India to be satisfied with the first results," Mr. Barre said.

"India is engaged in competition for capital, technology and market shares with many dynamic countries of the world," he added, warning that foreign investors

would go to other destinations if India applied the brakes on reform.

Populist electoral considerations in this "delicate period" should not lead to delays in implementing reforms nor should the government loosen the lid on its coffers and spend extravagantly, he warned.

A bright economy, cushioned by record foreign exchange reserves of about \$20 billion, a resurgent industry and vigorous exports should goad the country into speeding up reform, the former French premier said.

India began the reforms in mid-1991 with a double devaluation of the overvalued rupee, banished four decades of state controls on industry and trade, lowered tariffs and 20 per cent for intermediate goods and components and 35 per cent for consumer goods.

Mr. Barre said India, with a population of 900 million, also needed to pay greater attention to birth control and to technical education to increase the number of skilled workers for the expanding industry.

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But Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's government has so far shied away from removing a ban on imports.

"It is necessary to go on with the policy of reform... It is not possible for India to be satisfied with the first results," Mr. Barre said.

"India is engaged in competition for capital, technology and market shares with many dynamic countries of the world," he added, warning that foreign investors

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Yeltsin promises early end to economic crisis

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin Saturday promised an early end to Russia's protracted economic crisis and outlined plans to move to a decisive second stage of economic reform.

"The crisis period is about to be overcome," he told a meeting of Russia's economic elite in the marble hall of the Moscow Kremlin, a room long used for meetings of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party.

"We should leave the epoch of half-decisions in this year and we must launch an offensive to complete financial stabilisation in 1995," Mr. Yeltsin added.

Labour laws need to be made more flexible, it said. The government, which is committed to shedding 49 per cent of its equity in the public sector, was told to speed up the movement towards privatisation.

His government has already produced a tough draft budget for the year promising to bring the deficit down to 7.8 per cent of gross domestic product and bring monthly inflation to one or 1.5 per cent by the second half of the year.

Russian prices rose 15.1 per cent in October, the highest monthly rise since the start of the year.

Top economists, regional leaders and senior industrialists are all attending the meeting, which is jointly chaired by Mr. Yeltsin and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Mr. Chernomyrdin, a former gas industry boss who has nailed his colours tentatively to a reformist mast, said Russia was ready for some compromise on the

1995 budget, but it would not give an inch on the size of the deficit or the way it was financed.

He also said the moderately tough policies of the first three years of economic reform would not help in the second stage, which needed the "resolute acceleration of macroeconomic stabilisation."

"If we do not act decisively we will be dragged into the abyss of protracted economic crisis," he said.

The 1995 draft budget says international loans and state securities should be used to fund the budget gap, breaking with post-Soviet tradition of taking central bank loans to fund government spending.

"Continuing to cover the budget deficit through central bank credits is a dead end," Mr. Chernomyrdin said. "We cannot agree with proposals to continue pumping money into the economy and to support ineffective structures. There can be no talk about a return to regulated prices and state orders."

The budget is already facing stiff opposition in the State Duma lower house of the Russian parliament.

Deputies voted Friday to set up a joint commission with the cabinet to examine the budget and come up with a new draft by Dec. 10.

"The draft is not realistic," the Duma's budget committee chairman Mikhail Zadorov told deputies. "The correlation between planned industrial output and expected inflation is not realistic. The rough rate, which the draft puts at average of 3.200 to the dollar, is not realistic."

The budget is already facing stiff opposition in the State Duma lower house of the Russian parliament.

"But how smoothly this happens will depend very much on whether Russia can beat inflation. If Russia can achieve financial stability, investment and know-how will flood in from all over the world and there would be 10 years or more of rapid economic growth," he told a news conference.

The State Statistics Committee said last week indust-

rial production, which has slumped since Russia launched an economic reform programme in early 1992, actually rose 9.5 per cent in October after a two per cent fall in September.

"We shouldn't make too much of one month's figures but I think we can now be sure that Russia's gross domestic product has stopped falling," Mr. Layard said.

Real consumption was 15 per cent higher than a year ago in the third quarter, he said. However, consumer prices rose 15.1 per cent in October compared with 15 per cent in September.

Yevgeny Yasin was quoted in the *Trud* daily as saying there would be further steep falls in inflation in the coming year provided Russia kept to its economic reforms.

"Inflation will not be more than seven or eight per cent in November and December, about five per cent in the first quarter of next year, two per cent by next December," he said.

The budget envisages a deficit of 7.8 per cent of GDP. Expenditure is seen as 22.3 per cent of GDP and the government has proposed taxes equal to 14.5 per cent of GDP — much higher than in 1993 and 1994.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY NOVEMBER 27, 1994

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL: TENDENCIES: The Sun enters Scorpio and you are imbued with a fresh new plan of attack on whatever may have been baffling you up to this point. Your mental ingenuity and manual dexterity will be put to the test.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22): This is the moment to use your initiative in whatever you do. You are in a world of a civic nature and above all take no chances today with your creditworthiness.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21): You find the difficult today to put into effect the ideas which you feel can be of the greatest help and assistance to you. Tonight avoid public pleasure.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20): It seems difficult to put your plans across during the daytime in communications and short jaunts but later you see how to improve basic conditions.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21): Think of what you can do to improve your financial well-being without taking any chances at the moment, then tonight you can find answers in periodicals.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21): Think about the personal conditions you want to have and go after them with confidence but tonight make a point to avoid extravagance.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21): Don't try to get close companions and an outside contact together during the day while tonight you find you can and enjoy a very good friend.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21): Consider the various intimate wishes you have and think of ways in the days ahead.

Birthstones of November: Topaz-Tiger's Eye

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt 'n' Jeff



THE BETTER HALF

By Glasberg



"I had new contact lenses made with your picture printed on them—to show the world I only have eyes for you!"

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CENEP

CAGIM

Ex-Soviet weightlifters dominate heavier classes

ISTANBUL (R) — Russia's Sergey Syrtsov dethroned defending champion and compatriot Viktor Tregubov for the 99-kilogramme world weightlifting crown Friday in a contest that showed the ex-Soviets still dominate the heavier classes.

Syrtsov broke his own three world records en route to the title, lifting 192.5 in the snatch, 225.5 in the jerk to total 417.5 kg and take Russia's second successive men's gold.

Syrtsov's jerk was recorded as 225.0 for the total, which must be divisible by 2.5 kg.

Tregubov, who is also reigning Olympic champion, trailed Syrtsov by 7.5 kg after the snatch, but was expected to catch up in the jerk, his better event.

Instead, he nearly bombed out, just managing to record 220.0 on his final jerk attempt for a total of 405.0 and the silver medal. He later said his knee was injured.

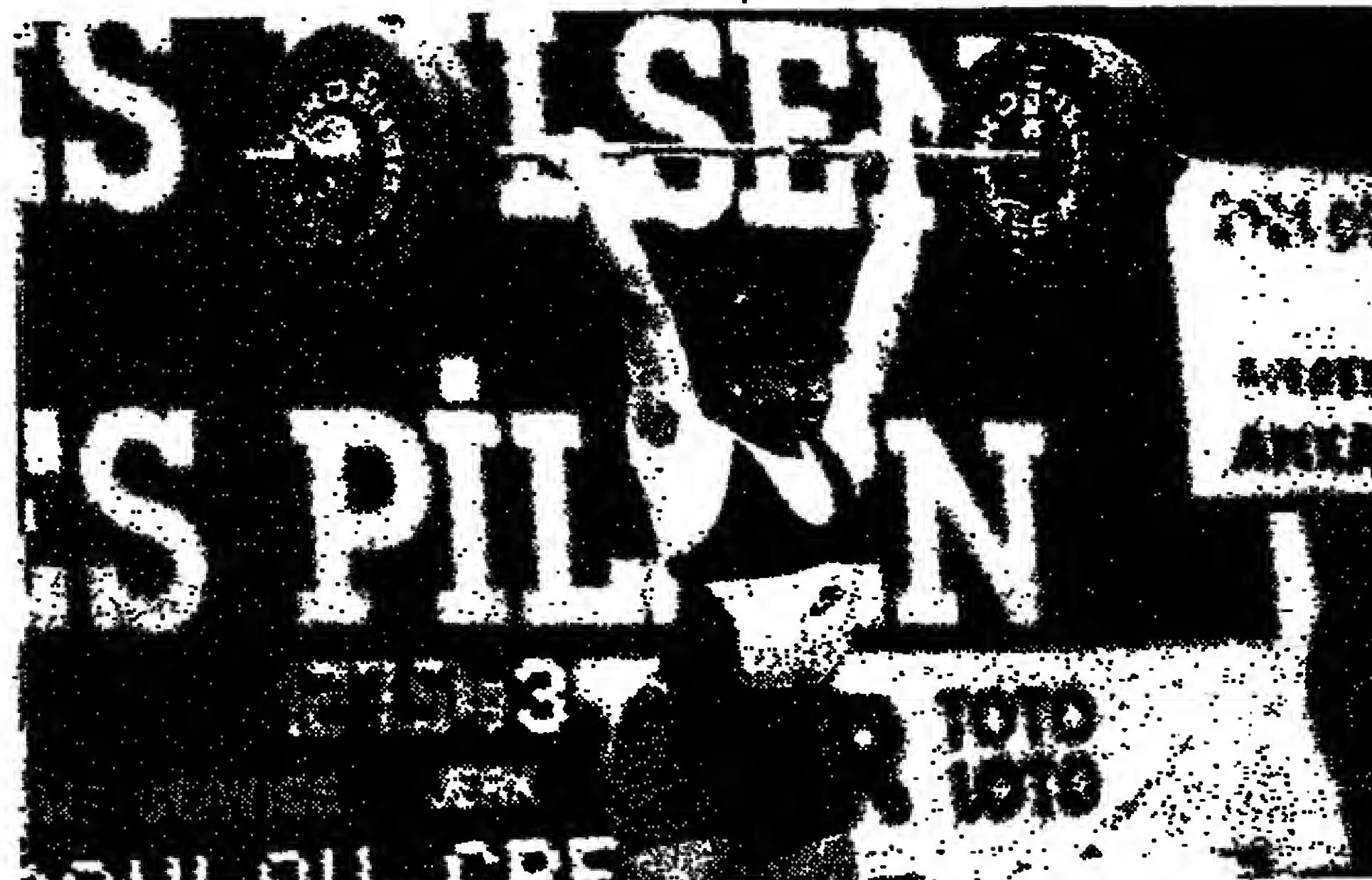
Third was Stanislav Rybalkchenko, with a combined 395.0 kg.

Although Turkey have swept to a commanding lead in the lighter men's events, Russian Alexey Petrov started an ex-Soviet takeover with the 91 kg and Tregubov continued the run which could last until the super-heavyweights Sunday.

Seven of the top 10 in the 99-kg class represented ex-Soviet republics.

Ukrainian Timur Taimazov is favourite to defend his title in the 108 kg.

Meanwhile Colombian discus star Maria Urrutia struck



Panagiota Antonopoulou of Greece balances the gold medal for lifting 127.5 kilogrammes in the 76-k category (AFP photo)

gold in her second sport by winning the women's 83 kg class Friday and also set a world record.

Urrutia, who has been out of weightlifting for two years because of injury, lifted 132.5 kg to better the world jerk record only minutes after a new mark of 130.0 kg had been set by second-placed Chen Shu-Chie.

The 29-year-old Urrutia totalled 237.5 kg to win gold while Chen lifted a total 235.0 kg.

The Colombia athlete, who holds the South American record for discus at 58.50 metres, began weightlifting in 1988 because her athletics

coach was also a lifting coach and she "took a fancy" to his other sport.

No Chinese lifters were entered in the 83 kg class, the third event in which they have not competed.

Even though they have

Weightlifting world results

Men's 99 kg

1. Sergey Syrtsov (Russia)
2. Viktor Tregubov (Russia)
3. Stanislav Rybalkchenko (Ukraine)
4. Aleksandr Karapetian (Armenia)
5. Arman Grigorian (Armenia)
6. Oleg Tchiriso (Belarus)
7. Denys Godfrid (Ukraine)
8. Metin Kadir (Bulgaria)
9. Mario Kalinke (Germany)
10. Krzysztof Zawadzki (Poland)

fielded a young, inexperienced team after leaving behind the lifters who outclassed all-comers at the Asian Games last month, Chinese women have taken gold and set world records in all the classes they have entered.

"He is strong, he is young," Weller said.

Kurlovich, Olympic champion in 1988 and 1992, holds the world record for the snatch at 202.5 kgs while Chemerkin, 17 kilos heavier than his rival at a vast 154 kgs, is world record holder for the jerk (250 kg) and

two-lift aggregate (450 kg).

The only credible threat to Chemerkin and Kurlovich comes from Stefan Botev, the former Bulgarian who now represents Australia.

But Botev is much lighter than his rivals at 120 kgs, which puts him at a distinct disadvantage.

"These are not recommendations but orders," he said. "Referees who don't comply with FIFA's instructions won't be used any longer in international matches."

Blatter said a pool of about 70 referees suitable for the 1994 World Cup finals in France would be drawn up in February. Final selection will be made much later.

Standards of play at this summer's World Cup finals in the United States were higher than for many years, largely thanks to a clampdown on defensive play.

FIFA ordered referees to send off players carrying out dangerous tackles from behind. It also changed the offside rules to favour forward play and instructed linesmen not to raise their flag in case of doubt.

However, Blatter said one recent study in France had shown there were refereeing errors in 8 out of 10 offside calls.

In a tentative step away from the male stranglehold on the sport, FIFA decided to introduce female referees and lineswomen at next summer's World Cup women's finals in Sweden.

Twelve men and 12 women will officiate the matches. There are now four women on FIFA's committee for women's football, as opposed to one in the past.

FIFA to tighten up refereeing standards

ZURICH (AP) — World soccer's governing body FIFA is launching a new drive to tighten up refereeing following concerns that standards have become sloppier since this summer's World Cup.

FIFA General Secretary Sepp Blatter said Friday that there had been an increase in unpunished tackles from behind and faulty offside calls favouring defensive play.

"Instructions given by FIFA during the World Cup which created this famous 'American spirit' — the clampdown on tackling from behind, on the behaviour of the players — are no longer followed to the letter," Blatter told a news conference.

"These are not recommendations but orders," he said. "Referees who don't comply with FIFA's instructions won't be used any longer in international matches."

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Kurlovich takes on young challenger today

ISTANBUL (R) — Double Olympic champion Alexander Kurlovich faces the challenge of young pretender Andrei Chemerkin for the super-heavyweight crown at the World Weightlifting Championships Sunday.

Kurlovich, who missed the last world championships in Melbourne a year ago, is seeking his fourth world championship victory.

But reigning champion Romy Weller of Germany, unable to defend his title because of injury, fancies the chances of young challenger Chemerkin, 10 years younger than the greying 32-year-old from Belarus.

"He is strong, he is young," Weller said.

Kurlovich, Olympic champion in 1988 and 1992, holds the world record for the snatch at 202.5 kgs while Chemerkin, 17 kilos heavier than his rival at a vast 154 kgs, is world record holder for the jerk (250 kg) and

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Brazilian club face 3 games in one day

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — One of Brazil's leading soccer clubs will play three official games on the same day next month as they struggle to fulfil the country's crushing fixture list.

Gremio, world club champions in 1983, will go one better than Sao Paulo who last week played two official matches on one night.

"This is absolutely absurd," said Gremio President Fabio Koff in a telephone interview from the southern city of Porto Alegre where the club are based.

"There are no fans, no players and no directors who can stand so many games."

Koff said he expected virtually all the 50 players at the club to take part in the games on December 11 and the club

will charge one real (\$1.2) for fans to watch all three matches.

The club's first team have been concentrating on the Brazilian championship since September, which involves two matches a week.

They have also taken part in the South American Supercup, played annually between past South American club champions, and the Conmebol Cup, a South American version of Europe's prestigious UEFA Cup, both tournaments involve one game a week until teams are knocked out.

But at the same time, the club has been involved in the qualifying stage for next year's local competition, the Rio Grande Do Sul, or Gaucho, championship.

national level.

Koff said Gremio would like to abandon the Gaucho Championship but could not as the Gaucho Federation would suspend them and this would in turn make them ineligible for all other competitions.

Last week Sao Paulo played a Conmebol Cup match against Sporting Cristal of Peru and a Brazilian championship match against Gremio on the same night. They fielded a reserve team in the first game and won both matches 3-1. One player, midfielder Juninho, came on as a substitute in both games.

"I'm just glad we didn't have to play in the morning as well," said coach Tele Santana at the time.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Serbia to face Bosnia in basketball battle

MUNICH (AP) — Serbia and Montenegro were given the chance to reach the 1995 European Basketball Championships Saturday, as the rump Yugoslavia continued its return to world sport. However the men's team will have to do battle with Bosnia-Herzegovina — whose rebel Serbs Belgrade openly supported until August in the ongoing war there — if it is to make the championships in Athens next June. The move was announced here after a meeting of the European Board of the International Basketball Federation (FIBA). Yugoslavia join Bosnia-Herzegovina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia and Turkey in a men's round-robin qualifier, while the women face Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland for a place in their championships in Brno, Czech Republic in June.

Rugby returns to Olympics

CARDIFF (AP) — Rugby union was officially accepted back into the Olympic movement Saturday and plans are already in hand for a sevens or tens tournament at the 2004 Games. Vernon Pugh, chairman of the International rugby board said that an Olympic event could take the place of the Rugby World Cup Sevens tournament, which was launched last year in Edinburgh. Juan Antonio Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee welcomed rugby union back at a ceremony in Cardiff City Hall. A replica of the rugby ball used in the 1924 Olympic final between the U.S. and France, was handed to Samaranch by Pugh.

Harold Ellis scored 19 of his 24 points in the fourth quarter to rally the Clippers, now 0-12. Los Angeles is five losses shy of the all-time NBA record of 17 straight defeats to open a season, set by Miami in its inaugural season, 1988.

In Atlanta, Vlade Divac scored 15 points and Tony Smith and Antonio Harvey added 13 apiece off the bench as the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Hawks 97-87.

At Indiana, Rik Smits scored a season-high 30 points and Reggie Miller added 2 as the Pacers rallied for their fourth straight win, 111-106 over the Milwaukee Bucks.

Todd Day tied a career high with 30 points for the Bucks.

At Detroit, Kevin Willis scored a season-high 30 points, including eight during a fourth-quarter surge, as the Miami Heat posted their first road win of the season, 111-97 over the Pistons.

At Minnesota, Clarence Weatherspoon scored 19 points as the Philadelphia 76ers routed the Timberwolves 109-71.

Only Donyell Marshall's tip-in during the final seconds prevented Philly from allowing a team-record-low 69 points.

Minnesota's 71 points was second lowest total in its history. The 38-point defeat was the worst in team history.

At Utah, Karl Malone scored 27 points and dished out eight assists as the Jazz pummeled the Chicago Bulls 124-94.

Scottie Pippen led the Bulls with just 15 points.

In San Antonio, Gary Payton scored eight of his 21 points during a 25-2 first-quarter surge as the Seattle SuperSonics cruised to a 114-94 win over the Spurs.

Sean Elliott led the Spurs with 27 points. David Robinson added 209 points, 11 rebounds and five blocks.

Robson extends contract with Porto

LISBON (R) — Former England manager Bobby Robson has extended his contract with Portuguese first division Porto for a further two seasons, club president Jorge Pinto da Costa said Friday. Robson joined Porto last December after being sacked by the Lisbon club Sporting. Porto currently lead the Portuguese first division by goal difference over Sporting. Both clubs have 19 points after 11 matches.

Injury forces Groves to quit

SOUTHAMPTON (AP) — Southampton's former Arsenal winger Perry Groves has quit the game after losing a two-year battle against an ankle ligament injury. The 28-year-old Groves has made only 18 first team appearances for the Saints since his 750,000 pound move from Highbury in September 1992 and has not played in the first team since season 1992-93. Saints manager Alan Ball said: "It is very sad for Perry but he has to face up to the facts I'm afraid."

Comaneci performs before Romanian premier

BUCHAREST (AP) — Star gymnast Nadia Comaneci performed a graceful floor routine Friday before an adoring crowd that included Premier Nicolae Vacaroiu. Dressed in a crushed pink velvet leotard, Nadia twisted and spun languorously in a performance broadcast live on state television. Now 33, Comaneci was the first gymnast ever to score a perfect 10 in the Montreal 1976 Olympic Games. In a joint floor routine with her American fiance Bart Conner, crowd of 4,000 with a jazzy number, Comaneci returned to a Romania earlier this week, five years after she fled the country. One month after she left, the communist regime of Nicolae Ceausescu was overthrown and the dictator and his wife Elena executed by firing squad.

Rangers pile on Aberdeen agony

GLASGOW (AP) — Goal king Ally McCoist was back in the old routine Friday night when his 299th goal for Glasgow Rangers sank Aberdeen 1-0 at Ibrox. It was a joyous night for the 32-year-old who had not scored since April 26 because of a series of injuries. The only blot on the evening for Rangers boss Walter Smith was a late booking for French defender Basile Boli which will land him an SFA suspension on Dec. 10. It was a strange decision by referee Jim McGilvray, awarded for handball against Boli when he was lying injured on the ground.

Australia-Sweden in ATP doubles final

JAKARTA (AP) — Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde know exactly what to expect when they take on the ATP World Doubles Championship here. "We've won again," Bjorkman said after his pair's 6-3, 6-2 victory over Australian David Adams and Russian Andrei Olshovskiy. "We've won quite easily as we played our best 'Woodies' struggled through a three-set match against the Netherlands." Bjorkman added: "The second-seeded reigning champions Jacco Eltingh and Paul Haarhuis from the Netherlands were beaten in the first set by the Australians, but they fought back in the second set to win 6-3, 6-2." Bjorkman and Woodbridge will play in the final on Sunday against the Netherlands' Eltingh and Haarhuis.

Werder Bremen defeat Schalke

BERLIN (AP) — Bernd Hobech entered as a substitute in the second half and scored four minutes later to lead the Bundesliga, Germany's first-division soccer league. In Friday's only other game, VFL Bochum stopped Bayer with Uerdingen 2-1. Bremen rose to a tie on points for first place with Borussia Dortmund, which plays Saturday against third-placed Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Bullets, Trail Blazers and Celtics lose

LANDOVER, Maryland (

to tighten up
seeing standards

Sports

Inconsistent Bills need winning streak to make playoffs

The Associated Press

THEY LOSE, they win, they lose. That's been the most consistent thing about the Jerry-and-Hyde Buffalo Bills this season.

The resemble champions one week and chumps the next.

At 6-6 after Thursday's loss to Detroit, the four-time AFC champions need four games of winning consistency if they hope to make the National Football League playoffs.

"Six losses, we haven't had a six-loss season since I got here, and this is my fifth season," said defensive end Phil Hansen. "All we can do now is win these last four games, and hope some other teams lose, and that's not how the Buffalo Bills like to do things."

Playing .500 ball and possibly missing the postseason is incomprehensible to most of the Bills, who have never known anything but winning seasons.

"It's really difficult, especially for those of us that have been around for a while," said centre Kent Hull. "We're more used to 10-2 or 9-3. I just hope the young guys don't get used to this."

Winning the last four games should put the Bills into the playoffs at 10-6, though capturing another AFC East title is unlikely.

"There's not much room left for error," said quarterback Jim Kelly, who exhorted his teammates before their 35-21 loss to Detroit that the playoffs had already begun.

Even if they land a wild-card spot, the Bills would probably face a tough playoff round that would be mostly or entirely road games.

They've done it before, rallying from a 35-3 deficit to

beat Houston in that wildest of wild-card games two years ago, then going on the road to defeat Pittsburgh and Miami.

But that was a younger, less-battered, hungrier team that hadn't begun to unravel through free agency. Mostly, it was a more consistent team, one that wouldn't manhandle Kansas City and Miami one week then choke against teams like Chicago and Indianapolis.

Jets, Dolphins to play for AFC East

No team has tantalised its fans over the past two decades more than the New York Jets, who win a few big games only to lose a lot of small ones.

This Sunday, if they beat Miami, they move into a tie for first in the AFC East with four games to go in the National Football League season. Miami is 7-4 to the Jets' 6-5 but the Dolphins' offense has withered in recent weeks.

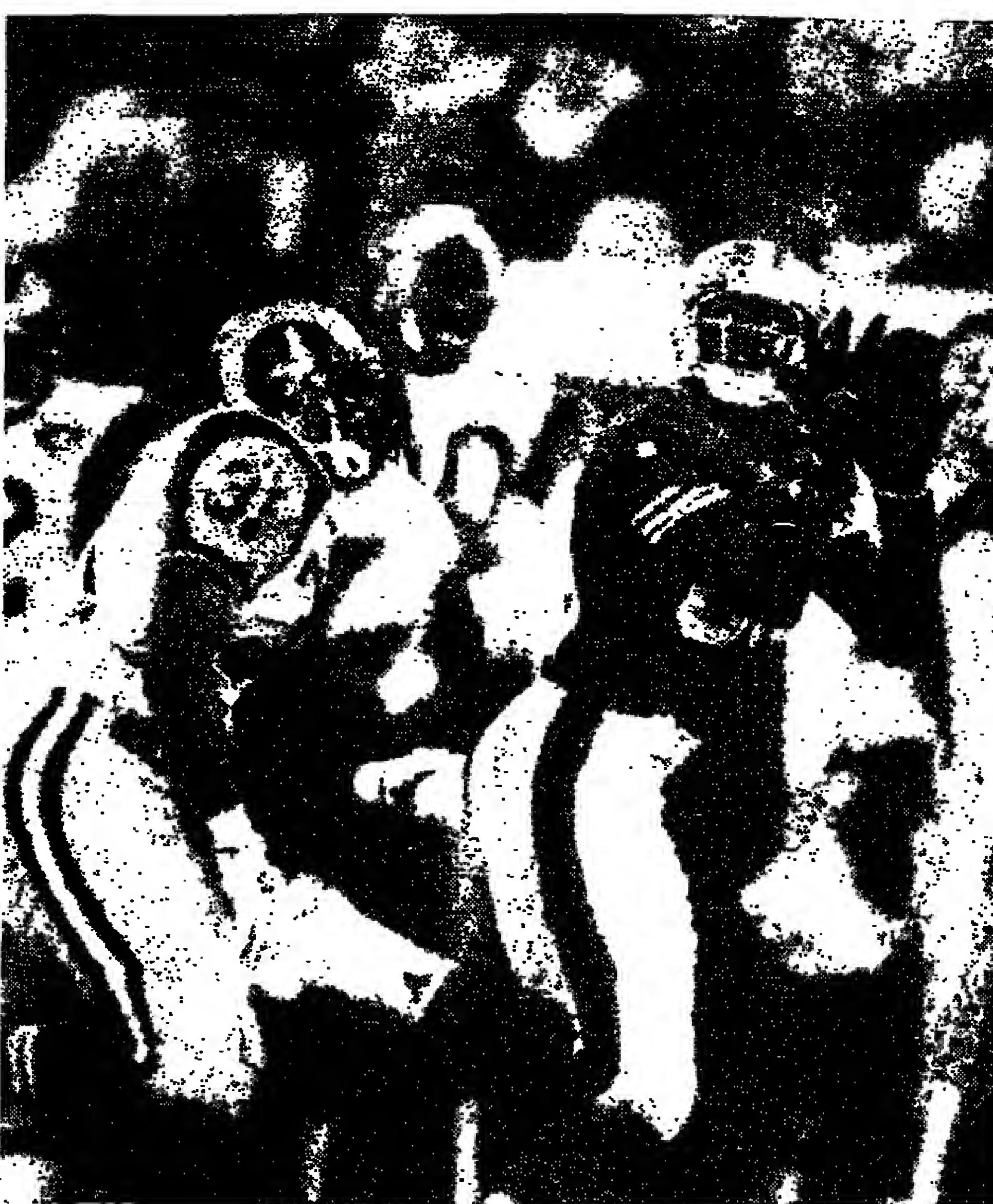
There were two Thanksgiving Day games, with Detroit beating Buffalo 35-21, and Dallas downing Green Bay 42-31.

In other games Sunday, Houston is at Cleveland; Philadelphia at Atlanta; Tampa Bay at Minnesota; Chicago at Arizona; Cincinnati at Denver; Kansas City at Seattle; the Los Angeles Rams at San Diego; the New York Giants at Washington; Pittsburgh at the Los Angeles Raiders, and New England at Indianapolis.

San Francisco visits New Orleans Monday night.

Cowboys' Garrett lives out 'fairy tale'

Jason Garrett's National Football League "fairy tale" should come to an end on



The 49ers' Jerry Rice (right) had Steve Israel of the Rams beat as he eyed a Steve Young pass (AFP photo)

Monday.

The third-string quarterback who led the Dallas Cowboys to a 42-31 victory over the Green Bay Packers

Thursday expects to be back on the scout team running plays.

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Iraq schools update teaching on Kuwait

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraqi schools are teaching their pupils that Kuwait is a sovereign state and maps showing the new U.N.-defined border will be added to textbooks as soon as they are available, Education Minister Hukmat Al Bazzaz said on Saturday.

"With regard to (U.N.) Security Council resolutions and the recognition of Kuwait there are no problems as far as the education ministry is concerned," Mr. Bazzaz told Reuters.

He said geography and history texts now in use by Iraq's five million school children were published before the 1990-91 Gulf crisis. Copies shown to Reuters listed Kuwait as an independent state.

Kuwait's Education Minister Ahmad Abdullah Al Rouai complained on Tuesday that Iraqi schools had not gone far enough in erasing the territorial claim behind the 1990 invasion of the emirate.

He said Iraqi textbooks still showed the old border and history books referred to the Gulf war as "the mother of battles" — a tag coined during the seven months that Iraq occupied Kuwait, claimed it as its 19th province and defied a U.S.-led alliance to evict it.

"In our textbooks there is nothing which violates U.N. resolutions," Mr. Bazzaz replied. "If they (the Kuwaitis) have anything, let them tell us where. We are back to historical facts stated before 1990. Therefore they (such references) are not supposed to be there."

"We tell them issues are moving in accordance to (U.N.) resolutions," he said. "It is time Arab countries closed this chapter and mended fences with Iraq. From our side there is no sensitivity."

New maps will be incorporated in school texts when they are made available by the Foreign Ministry, he said. "I do not think this (the map) is a problem."

Iraq's ruling Revolutionary Command Council, meeting a key condition in Gulf war ceasefire terms, issued a decree on Oct. 10 recognising Kuwait within its U.N.-demarcated borders. It ordered all government departments to put the decree into effect.

Mr. Bazzaz said he had sent copies of the textbooks now in use to the Arab League Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation to show that Iraq was honouring its commitments. Kuwait to mine waters

Kuwait plans to spread mines in the water near its sea frontier with Iraq to prevent infiltration attempts, a Kuwait newspaper reported on Saturday.

"A military source revealed to Watan that a plan to mine the northern Kuwaiti territorial waters has been prepared," it said. Officials were not available for comment.

Al Watan said the mines would be scattered in the waters north of Bubiyan and Warba islands in the northern Gulf and the exits of Khor Abdullah water passage leading to Iraq. It said Kuwait was negotiating with potential suppliers in Russia, Italy and the United States.

Kuwait in 1993 dug a 210-kilometre trench along its land border with Iraq with the aim of preventing infiltrators.

Kuwait has said there have been numerous attempts to cross the Iraq-Kuwait border since the U.S.-led coalition ended Iraq's occupation of the emirate in February 1991.

Iraq blasts U.N. report

Iraq said on Saturday a report by U.N. human rights investigator Max van der Stoel accusing it of human rights violations was biased and politically motivated.

"If (the report) is characterised with lies, lacks credibility, is biased and is far away from being objective," Mohammad Abdullah Al Douri, head of the legal section and human rights department at Iraq's Foreign Ministry, told Baghdad's state-run newspapers.

Mr. Douri said Mr. Van der Stoel was "just a political tool being used to harm Iraq."

In a report on human rights on Tuesday, Mr. Van der Stoel, former Netherlands foreign minister, called on Iraq to halt political killings, abrogate recent decrees providing for amputation of hands, feet or ears and accept U.N. resolutions permitting the sale of some oil to buy badly-needed food and medicine.

Mr. Van der Stoel, a special rapporteur of the U.N. Human Rights Commission, accused the Iraqi authorities of what he described as "flagrant and determined violations of Iraq's international human rights obligations."

He listed three recent cases of alleged political killings. They involved an Iraqi exile dissident, Sheikh Talib Al Sabeel Al Tamini, shot dead in Beirut last April allegedly by two members of the Iraqi embassy in Lebanon. German journalist Lissy Schmidt, shot dead with her Kurdish bodyguard in northern Iraq, also in April, and Shiite leader Mohammad Taqi Al Khoi, killed in a road accident in southern Iraq in July.

Regarding cruel and unusual punishments, he cited recent decrees by Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council providing for the amputation of the right hand for certain offences, the left foot for a repeat offence and for the punishment of army deserters or anyone sheltering them by the cutting off an ear.

"There are no human rights in Iraq and we can really speak about a barbaric regime," the report said.

He called on Iraq to allow human rights monitors into the country, a request Bagh-

(Continued on page 7)

EU to host Mideast peace talks

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Israeli and Palestinian negotiators will seek to advance their peace accord and activate pledges of millions of dollars in international aid for the autonomous Palestinian National Authority (PNA) during talks here Monday to Wednesday.

The European Union (EU)-backed talks will be attended by Yasser Arafat, president of the authority, and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who will meet Monday evening to follow up Israel's recent agreement that elections can be organised in Gaza and the West Bank, officials said.

Diplomatic sources here said the talks would focus on "implementing the next stage of the self-rule agreement, the organisation of elections and the withdrawal of Israeli troops" from the main towns on the West Bank.

On Monday, Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres will meet the Greek, German and French foreign ministers, the so-called troika representing the past, present and future incumbents of the EU presidency who are in Brussels for a scheduled meeting of foreign ministers.

The Palestinians will be lobbying the international community in Brussels on Tuesday and Wednesday to promises to provide aid to their territories. Mr. Arafat is expected to take part in a meeting of the ad hoc group of donor countries.

"We have received \$70 out of the \$700 million announced for 1994," said Nabil Shaath, a close colleague of Mr. Arafat and the authority's head of planning and international cooperation.

In 1993, donor countries agreed to grant the Palestinians \$2.4 billion over five years.

"The explosion of violence can only be understood in the light of Israeli delays in implementing the agreements and delays in the financial aid promised," he told a Belgian newspaper in a reference to clashes between police and hardline activists which left 14 people dead in Gaza on Nov. 17.

The Palestinian Authority hopes the meeting will lead to the payment of at least \$200 million by the end of the year in addition to the \$70 million already made available, a senior Palestinian official said.

"If the donor countries keep holding back, if they keep on with their drip-feed approach, we will not be able to create the institutions of self-rule" which could put forward infrastructure projects for financing, he said.

The EU has promised \$60 million ECU's (\$73 million), half of it to be handed over by the end of the year, a European Commission official said.

"But the grant depends on projects getting under way," he said.

(Continued on page 7)



TIMORESE DISSIDENTS. Timorese political refugees chant slogans and jubilate after arriving in Lisbon Friday. The refugees had been in hiding in the U.S. embassy in Jakarta

last week prior to being granted permission to leave the country (AFP photo)

France sees \$100m 'debt-equity' swap with Jordan as trendsetter

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A "debt-equity" swap agreement signed by the governments of France and Jordan, involving \$100 million of the Kingdom's debts to Paris, is the first such accord signed between Amman and any of its creditors at a discounted rate and the funds would be made available in Jordan for the buyer in local currency to buy capital in Jordanian ventures, Mr. Duger explained.

Michel Duger, economic and commercial counsellor at the French embassy, said the swap agreement was signed along with a separate debt rescheduling accord involving another \$200 million of Jordanian debts to France during a recent visit Finance Minister Sami Gammoh paid to Paris.

Mr. Duger, addressing a press conference announcing the opening of a French commercial exhibition in Amman (see page 3), said of the debt swap accord: "It is the first such accord signed by Jordan and any of its creditor governments, and, if it works out well, such arrangements could help Jordan reduce its debt substantially."

France, which holds about \$600 million of Jordan's foreign debt of \$6.8 billion, has also extended a write-off of \$5 million to the Kingdom as a token gesture of its goodwill towards Amman. (The \$600 million figure does not include outstanding pay-

ments on French aircraft leased by Royal Jordanian, the national carrier. At the end of 1993, the dues were around \$400 million).

The "debt-equity" swap accord means that anyone interested in investing in Jordan can buy Jordanian dollars at a discounted rate and the funds would be made available in Jordan for the buyer in local currency to buy capital in Jordanian ventures, Mr. Duger explained.

Michel Duger, economic and commercial counsellor at the French embassy, said the swap agreement was signed along with a separate debt rescheduling accord involving another \$200 million of Jordanian debts to France during a recent visit Finance Minister Sami Gammoh paid to Paris.

Mr. Duger noted that French firms were interested in doing business in Jordan and perhaps also invest in the Kingdom, and said the swap accord could encourage some of them to actually invest here. He did not say whether any specific proposal was in the pipeline.

However, he indicated that French investments of any major size would be slow in coming. The Jordanian market is too small and this is a negative factor affecting possibilities of joint ventures, he said.

In addition, he noted, "the Palestinian situation (in the occupied territories) is not fully settled, unfortunately. And the problem of Iraq is also pending."

Now that the peace process had borne fruit, Mr. Duger said, he expected French companies to make their presence felt more in Jordan.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkey denies Belarus spying charge

ISTANBUL (R) — The Turkish Foreign Ministry Saturday denied charges by Belarus that two Turkish diplomats had engaged in spying. "Apart from working to advance relations between Belarus and Turkey our Minsk embassy has not involved in any other activity," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Belarus officials said on Friday that two Turkish diplomats in Minsk, who had the rank of attaché, would be expelled for "actions incompatible with diplomatic activities," the common phrase used to denote spying. In a statement that on Thursday a Belarus citizen "who had been recruited by Turkish agents" was detained. "On Nov. 24 in Minsk there was an attempt to transfer intelligence material to Turkish special service agents acting under the cover of the Turkish embassy in Belarus," said the statement, published in Minsk newspaper on Friday. Turkey said the decision by Belarus would "certainly have a negative effect" on relations between the two countries.

"There's a growing movement within Pakistan that says 'if you're not getting anywhere for being good guys, then what's the point?'" said Ms. Bhutto in the interview published on the eve of her official visit to Britain. "I conducted a poll and 90 per cent thought Pakistan should detonate a nuclear device."

"It's a dangerous situation. Pakistan has showed restraint. This should be recognised and rewarded."

"If it isn't, the forces of moderation will be thrown to one side and the forces of extremism will take over. We have a lot of extremists around. We don't want another Bosnia," Ms. Bhutto said.

"(Pakistan is) the only moderate Muslim country in the region. It's very important to support moderation in the Muslim World. Pakistan could be a role model."

Ms. Bhutto said she was frustrated at the continued

(Continued on page 7)

Indian force quits Baidoa

MOGADISHU (R) — The last of thousands of Indian peacekeepers withdrew on Saturday from the inland Somalia town of Baidoa, leaving residents fearful of a resurgence of clan violence.

U.N. military spokesman Major Zubair Chattha told reporters that the Indian troops had handed over major facilities such as the airport to the U.N.-trained Somali police force.

But many fear the police will be outgunned — or simply join in the fight — if clan militias decide to battle over control of the airport and other parts of the town, which is in the centre of Somalia's most fertile farming region.

The peacekeepers became popular in the southern port of Kismayu where they treated tens of thousands of Somalis at their hospital, took care of orphans and helped revive the nomad's livestock herds.

On Saturday, they withdrew to the capital Mogadishu by road unimpeded.

There have been widespread fears that the 15,000 U.N. troops still in Somalia would be attacked by militias as they withdraw ahead of the March 31 deadline set by the Security Council.

Indian troops from the 5,000-strong contingent serving with the U.N. in Somalia are also due to leave Kismayu on Wednesday.

If clan violence does erupt, aid workers and Somalis say it is most likely to take place in Kismayu, where allies of Mogadishu warlord Mohammad Farah Aideed could attack the rival militias of Mohammad Said Hersi Morgan.

Mr. Morgan's followers have loose control of Kismayu city and are likely to move into the airport and port as Indian troops leave by ship.

General Aideed's allies could then move in from the northern approach. Clan fighting in recent months has already displaced thousands of civilians in the fertile lands of the Jubba River valley of inland from Kismayu.

U.N. efforts to broker peace between the warlords have failed since U.S.-led troops were first in to end a famine that killed 300,000 and restore order in 1992.

In the breakaway northwest of Somalia, aid workers were able to visit the town of Hargeisa for the first time since clan fighting erupted there nearly two weeks ago.

The aid workers said that they had seen some 79 war casualties in Hargeisa's hospital. Of those, 23 had died, including four children caught in the crossfire.

The United Nations has flown relief supplies, including tents and blankets to the village of Burama west of Hargeisa to help civilians who fled the fighting.

Relief operations are being led by the U.N. Children's Fund although several other U.N. and independent relief groups also work in the region.

Aid workers have described reports that thousands of refugees are on the move into neighbouring Ethiopia as exaggerated.

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Column 8

Buckingham Palace to reveal royal accounts

LONDON (AFP) — Buckingham Palace is to publish annual accounts detailing how £20 million (\$31 million) of taxpayers' money is spent running the royal household, official sources said Friday. The first annual report will be published next July in line with a government recommendation. The move follows a report by the public accounts committee of parliament's lower house in September which called for greater "public visibility" of how such so-called grant-in-aid is spent. A government response to the all-party committee's report Friday recommended publication of the royal household's reports and annual accounts. A palace spokesman said the royal family had nothing to hide and would be delighted to publish a full annual report.

The spending levels hit the headlines earlier this year when Queen Elizabeth authorised her advisers to seek legal advice following "misleading and inaccurate" media reports of the committee's findings. The grant-in-aid is spent on maintaining occupied royal palaces and also covers the cost of gas, electricity, water and telephones. "An annual report will be published," said the palace spokesman. "There is a good story to tell and the household will be pleased to tell it. 'We believe in openness — we have nothing to hide.'

U.N. military spokesman Major Zubair Chattha told reporters that the Indian troops had handed over major port facilities such as the airport to the U.N.-trained Somali police force.

But many fear the police will be outgunned — or simply join in the fight — if clan militias decide to battle over control of the airport and other parts of the town, which is in the centre of Somalia's most fertile farming region.

The peacekeepers became popular in the southern port of Kismayu where they treated tens of thousands of Somalis at their hospital, took care of orphans and helped revive the nomad's livestock herds.

On Saturday, they withdrew to the capital Mogadishu by road unimpeded.

There have been widespread fears that the 15,000 U.N. troops still in Somalia would be attacked by militias as they withdraw ahead of the March 31 deadline set by the Security Council.

Indian troops from the 5,000-strong contingent serving with the U.N. in Somalia are also due to leave Kismayu on Wednesday.

If clan violence does erupt, aid workers and Somalis say it is most likely to take place in Kismayu, where allies of Mogadishu warlord Mohammad Farah Aideed could attack the rival militias of Mohammad Said Hersi Morgan.

Mr. Morgan's followers have loose control of Kismayu city and are likely to move into the airport and port as Indian troops leave by ship.

General Aideed's allies could then move in from the northern approach. Clan fighting in recent months has already displaced thousands of civilians in the fertile lands of the Jubba River valley of inland from Kismayu.

U.N. efforts to broker peace between the warlords have failed since U.S.-led troops were first in to end a famine that killed 300,000 and restore order in 1992.

In the breakaway northwest of Somalia, aid workers were able to visit the town of Hargeisa for the first time since clan fighting erupted there nearly two weeks ago.

The aid workers said that they had seen some 79 war casualties in Hargeisa's hospital. Of those, 23 had died, including four children caught in the crossfire.

The United Nations has flown relief supplies, including tents and blankets to the village of Burama west of Hargeisa to help civilians who fled the fighting.

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Palestinians weigh heavily on Lebanon and its peace options

BEIRUT (AFP) — The Palestinian presence in Lebanon for the last four decades is seen as a heavy political and economic burden in Beirut and influences its stand in the Middle East peace process.